

SHORT STORIES

EDITED BY
C. ARTHUR PEARSON (OF PEARSON'S WEEKLY)

NO. 428.

FOR WEEK ENDING MARCH 13TH, 1897.

[ONE PENNY.]

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March 13, 1897.

No. 12.

S.S. S.S.

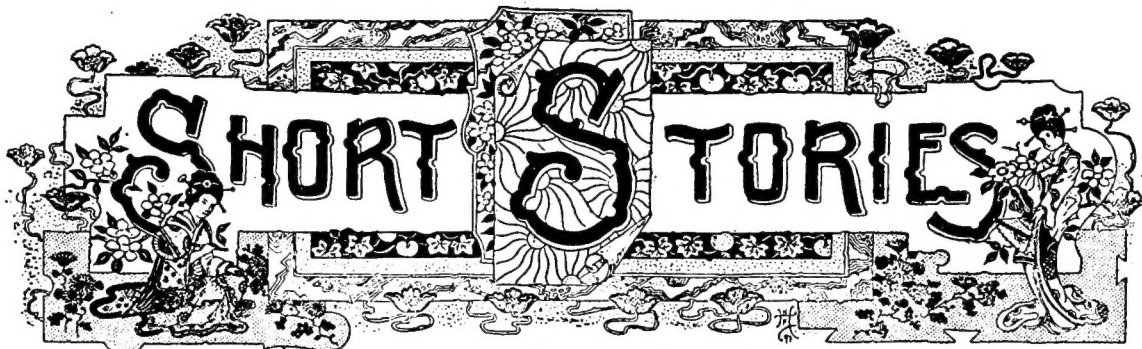
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PEARSON'S**£100
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No. 12.

Mar. 13, 1897.

NEWSAGENTS

S.S. S.S.



No. 428.]

For the Week ending March 13th, 1897.

[ONE PENNY.]

That Wedding Cake.

"LETTERS, sir!"

"Thank you, Thomas. Put them down and take yourself off!"

I had just finished my breakfast, and the tiny silver *chocolatiere*, with the bachelor service of transparent china, still stood on the damask-draped round table. It was a bright little room, with its white and gold paper and high-heaped grate, in the grey light of this chill December morning, when the air was thick with noiselessly falling snow-flakes. And this contrast between the bitter atmosphere without and the tropical warmth of my own special nook gave me an additional consciousness of satisfaction, as I leant back in my chair and proceeded to examine my correspondence.

"Lee Worcester wants to know if I can go there to tea this evening. Of course I can; Lee's wife is a perfect little rosebud, and one, besides, who does not believe in cashiering all her husband's bachelor friends. And then I rather like that brown-eyed sister-in-law of his. Yes, I'll go, certainly. Hallo—here's a letter from my brother in Glenfield!"

I unfolded the document eagerly, scarcely able, at first, to credit the tidings it revealed.

"Well, here is a pretty state of things! Going to be married, claims my congratulations, says that Mary (who the dickens is 'Mary'?) is in great tribulation about the wedding cake; affair to come off on Wednesday and no cake to be had for love or money! Will I be the best fellow in the world, and send one down from D'Artier's?"

I glanced at the date of the letter; it had been delayed several days' posts, and there was not a minute to be lost. I rose and put on my hat and overcoat, giving more heedful gaze at the various directions about icing, weight, and decorations, which accompanied Tom's closely-written epistle, before I sallied boldly forth into the street on my novel errand.

It was just about one o'clock, the snow had ceased falling, and the sun shone brilliantly. D'Artier's was full, of course; there were at least a dozen ladies that I knew sitting at the tiny marble tables. I tried to assume an air of easy impudence, as if I had only come in for a pound of chocolate almonds; but it was of no use, I could not disguise the latent sheepishness of my aspect as I sauntered up to the counter.

"How can I serve you, sir?" demanded the trim damsel who presided over the saccharine treasures.

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I muttered something under my moustache, feeling a hot blush suffuse my whole countenance. Why wouldn't those inquisitive womankind attend to their ice-cream?

"Cake, sir? Certainly. For a party, sir? Pound cake, lemon, almond—"

"No, no," I bawled; "I want a wedding cake!"

"Oh, I beg your pardon, sir," tittered the atrocious shopwoman. Was it reality, or did I only fancy that the titter was echoed among the bonnets and furs beyond? However that might have been, the mere apprehension was sufficient to throw me into a cold perspiration.

The next moment, however, the counter was heaped with various temples of glistening white sugar, some wreathed with make-believe roses, some surmounted with Cupids, others pure white masses of icing. I surveyed them in a state of hopeless bewilderment.

"Perhaps, sir, it would be better if the lady could come with you to select," hazarded my enemy behind the counter.

I could endure this badgering no longer, but pounced upon a gigantic pyramid of sugar lilies, from which peeped up a tiny alabaster Cupid.

"I will take this; what is the price?"

"£3, sir."

I laid down the money, and never experienced so delicious a sensation of relief as at the moment when I gave the address to which I wanted it sent.

I went out of the shop with the eye of every woman upon me. At no time of my life has my vanity received so appalling a blow. My very knees trembled. On reaching the door I sprang into a hansom and drove to the club.

* * * * *

"How d'ye do, Golde? When is it to come off?"

"When is what to come off?" queried I, considerably puzzled at my friend Atherton's address.

"Your wedding, to be sure. Ah, you're a sly dog to keep us all in the dark so long."

"You can't have been much more in the dark than I am at this moment, Atherton. What on earth do you mean?"

But Atherton only wagged his head knowingly, and rushed off in pursuit of a 'bus, saying something of which I only caught the disconnected fragments "my wife," and "D'Artier's."

"Hang that wedding cake," was my internal ejaculation.

As I pursued my speculative way a tiny gloved hand was held out from a passing carriage.

"Ah, Mrs. Eveleigh, excuse me for not noticing you."
 "We all know that love is blind," said the lady, smiling. "Now I know why you haven't been to see me for such an age. Ah, you needn't look so unconscious. My niece was at D'Artier's this morning, and saw how particular you were in the selection of a certain article."

Before I could explain this piece of circumstantial evidence, there was a movement in the "block" of carriages which had caused the temporary detention of my fair friend, and her equipage rolled away, with a wave of the pretty hand and the archest of smiles.

I stood looking after her with an odd sort of impression that I should wake up presently to find myself married to somebody, whether or no; indeed, I was not altogether certain whether Mrs. Golde was not waiting for me at home.

How brilliantly the firelight and gas-light illumined that cosy little room at Lee Worcester's, with its pink-tinted walls and the crimson carpet sprinkled with small white buds. The piano was open, strewn with sheets of music, just as it had been left, its pearl keys glimmering softly in the subdued radiance of the one jet of light that glowed through a frosted glass shade above. The tea-table was all set—I had often dreamt of a home of my own that should be something like Worcester's in its snug evening comfort, and somehow that tea-table always formed part of the phantasm. There was something so bright and cheerful in the snowy damask and the sparkling glass and glittering china.

The golden slices of cake and tiny white muffins, breaking into crisp flakes that melted in one's mouth, and amber jellies, quivering like gigantic jewels through their crystal prison walls, produced a wonderfully agreeable effect on my epicurean sight. And I could imagine no prettier vision to crown it all than Mary Worcester in her crimson merino dress, edged round the throat with delicate lace, presiding at the silver tea urn. Except, perhaps—but that's neither here nor there!

I was a little disappointed, on entering, not to see Lee's sister-in-law, a trim little beauty, with brown, rippling hair and velvety eyes, somewhat between hazel and black, but I did not like to ask any questions, and consequently remained in ignorance until Mary casually remarked:

"Netty is very low-spirited this evening, perhaps she will come down stairs by-and-bye."

How I longed to ask what the matter was. Perhaps she had received bad news; perhaps she was, not well. I would have given my two ears to know, but I didn't dare to enquire.

"So you're going to be married, eh, Tracy, my boy?" said Lee, as we sat in front of the bright fire. "Well, you can't do better. A bachelor at best is a mere fraction of society."

I started up, annoyed beyond all endurance.

"For mercy's sake, dear Lee, do tell me where you picked up that ridiculous report!"

"Ridiculous report! That's pretty cool, upon my honour," exclaimed Worcester.

"Now, Mr. Golde," said Mary laughing, "don't deny the soft impeachment. I am sure you would enjoy a quiet home of your own much better than chambers. There is no charm against a sad heart like domestic bliss!"

There was a radiant softness in her own tender eyes as she spoke that penetrated me with the sudden conviction that I had been very foolish to remain single all these years.

"Do confess," she added gaily.

"But I have nothing on earth to confess!"

"Nonsense," said Mary, holding up a pretty warning finger. "What were you buying at D'Artier's this very morning?"

I turned scarlet, here was that everlasting wedding cake again!

Fortunately my inquisition was terminated for a moment by the entrance of Lee's sister-in-law, looking lovelier than I had ever seen her before, a little pale perhaps, however, and her silky eye lashes heavy with what I could almost have fancied recent tears, were it not that she seemed in extravagantly gay spirits. The soft flushes of colour came and went like pink shadows across her cheeks, and her coral lips were dimpled with the brightest of smiles, yet all the time I could not divest myself of the odd impression that she was ready to melt into an April shower of tears at any moment!

She lightly tendered me her congratulations upon the approaching "happy event," holding out a small, snowy hand loaded with sparkling rings as she did so.

"You speak in riddles, Miss Nettie."

"Don't pretend that you have not the key to them," she said, a little tremulously.

"I cannot comprehend what you mean," I answered.

She said no more, but sat quietly down, shading her eyes with her hand, as though the fire dazzled them. Mrs. Worcester, however, still pursued the obnoxious topic.

"Then how do you explain the wedding cake at D'Artier's?"

"Is that the only testimony upon which I am tried and convicted of a wilful intention of matrimony?"

"That is all; we are ready to hear your defence."

"Well, that unlucky mass of white sugar and dyspepsia was for my brother's wedding ceremonies, a hundred miles away. I assure you it had not the least connection with my matrimonial fortunes."

Nettie looked up with a rare brilliance under her long lashes, and an almost involuntary smile wreathing her lips; I took heart and went bravely on, cheered by a sudden inspiration.

"But I will purchase a bride cake twice as large for my own wedding, if Nettie will consent to be my bride."

There—I had done it! In less than five minutes I was an accepted lover, looking boldly into the wondrous liquid depths of those brown, beautiful eyes. A new sensation—but agreeable, very.

"And now, Tracy," said Mary mischievously, "I will tell you a secret; the reason Nettie cried half the afternoon and became so low-spirited this evening was that—"

"Mary!" remonstrated Nettie, with cheeks ablaze.

"That she heard you were buying a wedding cake," pursued Mary, putting away the white fingers with which Nettie vainly strove to fetter her tell-tale lips.

"I'll order another one to-morrow," said I meditatively. "Ah, I shouldn't have repined so much at Tom's commission had I known what a sweet little wife it would win me."

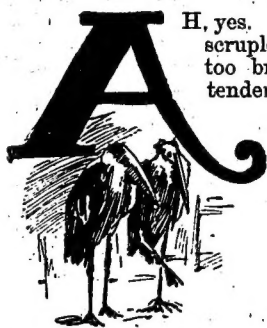
"Don't, Tracy," said Nettie, hiding her face on my shoulder.

And when Tom wrote to know why on earth I didn't come to his hymeneal ceremonies, I wrote back that I was obliged to stay to attend to a wedding of my own.

And such a wedding cake as graced the centre of our banquetting board! It's no use trying to describe its frosted splendours, but if any of my readers seriously contemplate getting married, I'll send them the recipe.

A. GRAVES.

THE DUEL.



H, yes. I really do feel some sort of scruple about this matter. He is too brave a lad, too young, too tender, for the shambles of such an old butcher as myself.

But, pshaw! Why should I, eh? It is his own folly. To insult me—me, Gaston de Samnarez—and at Bignon's, too, before all my friends and acquaintances. And such an insult! *Sangdieu!* but my blood boils at the thought. I—spat upon, drenched with wine-lees, called coward and

liar by this sprig, this but erstwhile school-boy! *Nom de Dieu!* but I will cut his comb, this cockerel.

And yet he could not have done aught else. He had no alternative. He says I insulted his sister. And so the cartel has gone out, and this morning I meet this young Don Quixote.

Ah! here we are on the ground. We are first, I see, my seconds and I. "Ah! good-day, doctor. Hope sincerely we won't trouble you much." What a charming spot where a man may meet his enemy, and where the two may discuss their little differences as gentlemen should. Here for a man's last bed, if so it should happen, is a piece of turf, softer than sleep. *Ma foi!* I grow poetic. I should be composing a sonnet instead of preparing to write an epitaph. But, really, what a heavenly morning! No balking, dazzling sun, but a cool, grey haze—sufficient light, with no nasty shadows from that background of trees.

"Charming, gentlemen, charming! My dear Raoul—ah! here comes my man! *Bonjour, messieurs!* He's a bit nervous, Raoul, but I'll wager, he's full of mettle." It is a pity—such a pretty boy, with a girl's peachy bloom on his young cheeks. But there is a murderous glare in his usually soft eyes as he looks at me, for am I not—malediction! Well, a little blood-letting may cure your chivalrous fever, my young sir; and so we will bleed you—we will bleed you!

At last, all preliminaries settled, we stand, boy and man, face to face, divided by two cruel ribbons of steel.

"*Engagez, gentlemen!*"

How gracefully, yet firmly, he stands. A very pretty style he has, too. I wonder who was his *maître d'escrime*? Whoever he may be, he teaches well, and his pupil does him credit. This is no raw, clumsy novice. *Parbleu!* What a wrist it is—supple, yet firm. Quick, too, on his legs—like a cat. Wastes too much energy in moving about; but that is a fault with all the youngsters. Ah, that was a sweet thrust in *quatre*, and how is that for a smart counter, eh? Prettily parried! Egad, a fine double, feint, and quick lunge! Well recovered; but do not try any more tricks with me, *mon enfant*, it will not pay.

Sacré! how his eyes burn as he watches me; and yet

through their fire I can see the soft reproachful glance of his sister. Poor girl! What lovely and innocent orbs she had. I am sorry, but—"

Mon Dieu! Phew! that was a narrow shave. Moral: leave thoughts of limpid eyes and remorse till after the fight. Too hot, too hot, my young friend. Faith, you will not get such another chance to send me drumming this pretty bit of sward, with hands and feet, if I can help it. *Mon Dieu!* how the clubs would ring, if I, by some careless play, went down before this raw schoolboy. How he himself— But not yet—not yet.

How our blades clash and rasp, and grate and rattle, as they wend their sinuous ways for life or death. Faith, it is a sinister music—the music of the sword. Hot work this and a deuced more trouble than I expected.

He's as nimble as a wild cat.

"*Touche!*"

Our swords are struck down, and the doctor steps to me. Disgrace! I could not recover in time, and this lad, this novice, has ripped my left shoulder with his awkward counter.

"No need for you, doctor. No harm done, gentlemen."

Only a warning to me not to play the fool with this forward young devotee of the foil and plastron. "I hope you are not satisfied with this trifling scratch, monsieur?"

A little blood, you say, will not plaster your sister's honour? *Eh bien*, you want all—all I have. Good, good! Now you shall never go home to boast of that paltry prick. Quick, before my shoulder stiffens.

"Ready, gentlemen? Then *engagez!*"

Hard work this, eh? What with lunging and recovering, shifting, breaking, and taking ground, my older legs are getting tired. But my stronger play is beginning to tell, and his wrist is weakening every moment.

Still he plays on pluckily. He is a true knight, indeed. I can have him when I please. Heart or lungs? Neither. His sister implores me out of his eyes. No fear, sweetheart: he shall live. I will just take the sting out of him. He is too young, too handsome; he will be a devil among the women in time, that boy—a second Gaston de Samnarez, perhaps.

Peste! he has scratched my hand now! It is nothing—nothing—it has but pricked the skin. Fight on—fight on, I say, you young hound! *Nom de Dieu!* if you must, you must, so there, and there, and there!

Spang goes the guard of my rapier, clicking sheer against his breast-bone, and his blood spouts out in a warm clammy jet on my shirt-front and face.

And there he lies—poor boy, poor boy—on the bloody sward, with his eyes, even in his death-throes, full of a mingling of the sister's soft, sad reproach, and his own unsatisfied yearning for revenge. His face will haunt me to my death—and, perhaps, even then—who knows?

A heart-rending shriek, a rustle among the bushes, and a white figure flies out and throws herself on the bloody corpse. Just Heaven! It is his sister! Let me be gone!

HASSAN.

AN AMERICAN ADVENTRESS



THE London season was well advanced; in fact, it was the week before Ascot, yet Harry Wainwright had only been in town a few hours when he strolled into his club for dinner. He took his letters from the hall porter with the air of a man to whom all correspondence is a bore, and rapidly glanced through them, till he came to one the contents of which caused him the utmost astonishment.

It ran as follows:

MY DEAR HARRY,—It may surprise you to learn from me that I intend shortly to be again married. As this will make a considerable alteration in my mode of living, I wish to see you as soon as possible. My breakfast hour is half-past ten, as usual.—Your affectionate father,
CHARLES WAINWRIGHT.

Such was Sir Wainwright's brief announcement of his engagement to his only son. The only son's answer was equally brief:

MY DEAR FATHER,—I have only come up to town this afternoon, when I found your letter waiting for me. I will call upon you to-morrow morning at half-past ten.—Your affectionate son,
HARRY WAINWRIGHT.

From these two letters it will appear that the relations between father and son were not of a confidential nature. It would be impossible to imagine two more different characters.

Lady Wainwright had died when Harry was hardly more than a child, and since her death Sir Charles had led an ordinary lazy bachelor's life. Both the house and the shooting on his country estate at Winterford had been let, and Sir Charles spent most of his time at his bijou residence at Mayfair. A few country-house parties were quite sufficient to satisfy his taste for field sports, which had never been very ardent. At the present time he had the reputation of being the best dressed, the most gentlemanly, and the most selfish man in London clubland.

To such a man a son must be an incubus in any case; but when the son is a keen sportsman, and possesses an utter disregard for all the conventionalities of life, the incubus becomes too great to bear. Fortunately for Harry Wainwright he had an income of five hundred a year under his mother's marriage settlement, and his father gave him another two hundred and fifty on the tacit understanding that he did not annoy him. So far the arrangement had proved satisfactory to both parties.

"Well, Wainwright, come to town at last? You don't seem very pleased with it, either."

The speaker was Lord Pelham, eldest son of the Duke of Harness. He was one of Harry Wainwright's greatest friends. They had been at Oxford together, and since then had ridden the same horses, shot the same coverts, and carried on harmless flirtations with the same woman—important factors in concentrating modern friendship.

"Yes, it was a nuisance to have to leave the salmon this weather, but I had to come up to town on business. Seen or heard anything of the governor, Pelham?"

"Do you mean Sir Charles?"

"Yes."

"Not much; except that they say he has been paying a lot of attention to a new beauty."

"Well, he has got engaged to somebody. Read that. The worst of it is that I came up to town to tell him that I am engaged, so I expect there will be a muddle."

"H'm! But tell me about yourself, old man. In the first place, I congratulate you; and in the next, let us order dinner."

Harry Wainwright's story was soon told. He had been staying in a country house in the north for the salmon-fishing, and had fallen in love with, proposed to, and been accepted by the daughter of his host, a girl named Maud Blossom. Pelham knew her intimately, having often stayed in the house, and again warmly congratulated his friend.

"Now tell me something about my future step-mother."

"Well, to speak the truth, I don't know very much about her; she is an American widow, with lots of cash, named Mrs. Stanley. As I have already said, she is sufficiently handsome to have become a fashionable beauty. Of course, she must be clever, or society would not have taken her on credit, so to speak, for nobody seems to know anything of her antecedents. But you will soon be able to judge for yourself. By-the-by, are not the Blossoms coming up to town?"

"Yes; they are coming up at the end of the week for Ascot, and have got rooms at the Langham."

Even "the pink wine of France" failed to dispel the gloom which the news of his father's engagement had cast on Harry Wainwright's mind. He knew that vanity and selfishness were the two chief traits of Sir Charles'

character. It was a hard confession for a son to have to make to himself, but it was the truth, and Harry Wainwright, now that he was engaged to be married, knew that he should have to look the truth sternly in the face.

He left the club soon after dinner, and went back to his hotel. What a difference twenty-four hours can make in a man's life! On the previous night Wainwright had retired to rest with the prospect of enjoying every happiness that love can bring. To-night he had already begun to realise that the path of that love would not be strewn with roses.

He was at his father's house in Mayfair punctually at half-past ten on the following morning, with a spirit which, though depressed, was resolute. If the father should sneer at the son's engagement, it was more than probable that the son would forget his filial duty and sneer at the father's.

There was no cordiality in Sir Charles's greeting. He received his son with the same polished politeness with which he would have received an utter stranger, and during breakfast neither made the slightest allusion to the subjects which filled each other's thoughts. Yet, although they talked on the ordinary topics of the day, a careful listener would have noticed that they resembled two boxers, each of whom was waiting for an opening.

Breakfast being finished, Sir Charles lit a cigarette, pushed his case towards his son, and, sinking into an armchair, said, in an indolent tone of voice:

"You gathered from my note, Harry, I suppose, that I intend to marry again? Of course, my marriage will alter considerably my present mode of living. I shall make Winterford my chief residence, where, my boy, you will always be welcome. Indeed, both Mrs. Stanley—that is my future wife—and myself would be glad if you lived there altogether."

Sir Charles had an idea of making his son his estate agent, with instruction to superintend the stables and the shooting.

"I am sorry, sir, but I am afraid the arrangement would be impossible. I really came up to town yesterday to tell you that I had become engaged to be married myself."

Sir Charles was silent with surprise for some seconds. Only those who knew him intimately could have recognised how angry the news had made him.

"H'm!" he answered pettishly. "Then I am afraid that the plans I had made for your happiness are destroyed. As a married man, I could not afford to give you the liberal allowance which I have been giving, while the prospect of a married stepson and his wife in the house would hardly be pleasing to my wife."

"Nor to mine either, sir, for that matter."

"And may I ask who is this lady you intend to make your wife?"

"Miss Blossom. I believe you were at school with her father."

The indirect allusion to the baronet's age added fuel to the fire of his irritation, but he only said:

"Ah, John Blossom. A very dense boy. I remember him at Eton."

"And may I ask who my future stepmother may be?"

"Certainly," Mrs. Stanley. I dare say you may have heard of her."

"I must plead ignorance to the name."

Sir Charles stood aghast. The name of Mrs. Stanley as a fashionable beauty had been on everybody's lips during the present season, yet his own son had not even heard of it.

"Mrs. Stanley's attractions are well known in society circles," he said stiffly, with a strong emphasis on the word society. "I am generally considered a fortunate man for having won her affections."

"Indeed. Then I congratulate you. Who was the late lamented Mr. Stanley?"

The veins on Sir Charles's forehead were swollen with passion, but he replied calmly:

"I cannot see that it matters in the least to you or to anybody else who he was. I asked you here this morning to tell you of my engagement and to accept your congratulations. You have thought fit to show your annoyance at my engagement, both by your words and your manner. There is only one thing now that I have to ask you and that is to keep your annoyance to yourself. It is the worst possible form to let family quarrels become public property. In regard to the private allowance which I have hitherto given you, that will have to cease entirely. You have an independent income of your own, and if you choose to marry with that income, it is your affair, not mine. I only know that I would not risk matrimony on the same terms."

"Is not that a question for Miss Blossom to decide?"

Sir Charles shrugged his shoulders.

"Perhaps so. At all events, it is not for me to decide. Now, in order to prevent any vulgar gossip, I wish you to call upon Mrs. Stanley. I, on my part, will call upon Miss Blossom. It is a matter of mere formal politeness; that is all."

"Certainly, sir; there is no need to tell the outside world, if we disagree."

"When will you call?" Sir Charles asked abruptly.

"The sooner the better. This afternoon, if you like."

"Very well. If you will call here about three o'clock, we will go together. Is Miss Blossom in town?"

"No, sir; but she is coming up on Monday for Ascot."

"Very good. Then I shall see you at three."

Such was the meeting between father and son: no affection, no sentiment, no anger had been expressed. Both were glad the interview had been got over without a scene. The son had lost a third of his income: the father had lost a good estate agent. Both knew that the gulf that separated them had been widened.

Mrs. Stanley certainly was the beauty of the London season. She had shot forth like a rocket over the firmament of society, but from what star she had emanated, and what was the propelling power of the emanation, were secrets which society had not succeeded in unravelling.

Society did know that she had made her *début* under the wing of Lady Highclass; that she had a charming house in Grosvenor Place; that she went everywhere, and that everybody worth knowing went to her "At Homes." That was sufficient for society; it was not sufficient for Lady Highclass.

At the time of the interview between Sir Charles Wainwright and his son, another interview was taking place between Lady Highclass and Mrs. Stanley, in the latter's boudoir. There was one point of resemblance in the two interviews; both were equally unpleasant.

"You remember our compact perfectly well. You were to give me five thousand pounds, if you got married."

"Exactly, Lady Highclass; but, then, I am not married."

"As good as married, anyway. I am pressed for

money, and am leaving town directly after Ascot. It can make no difference to you whether you pay me now or in a month's time, and it makes every difference to me."

"But it does make a very considerable difference to me. I have my expenses, as well as you have. You have already been paid more than sufficient for your services."

"Take care, Clare Stanley. I am not a woman to be insulted with impunity. If I have hitherto exercised my social influence on your behalf, I can also exercise it against you."

"And let society know that your influence is to be bought by the highest bidder. The British aristocracy will be proud of you."

"Perhaps. One thing is certain: that society will believe me and won't believe you."

"Might not society wonder how you, with your income manage to live at such an expensive rate? No, Lady Highclass, the part of the bully does not suit you. You know perfectly well who would be the sufferer if we were to quarrel."

"I don't want to quarrel," her ladyship retorted.

"But I want money, and must have it."

"But suppose that I have not got it to give you!"

Lady Highclass looked astounded.

"It is the truth. I have not five thousand pounds in the bank at the present time. I will give you a cheque for a thousand, and you must wait for the rest till it is due."

Lady Highclass protested!

Then she changed her tone to one of entreaty. But in vain. Mrs. Stanley was inflexible. So, as there was nothing more to be got, her ladyship took the cheque for a thousand pounds and left.

Mrs. Stanley leant back in her chair, and a smile of contempt came over her beautiful face.

"Yes, my lady," she muttered to herself, "if I had given you five thousand pounds you would have blackmailed me for more before my marriage. Bah! How I wish the whole farce were over."

Possessing a physical beauty which was as near perfection as possible, and a fascination of manner which was well-nigh irresistible, it was not surprising that, once launched into society, she should have sailed forth in front of all rivals.

The chief surprise about her career was that she should have accepted a baronet like Sir Charles Wainwright. He was considered two or three rungs too low in the ladder for a girl who had a royal prince dancing attendance on her.

Some few of the old loungers about Clubland said that Mrs. Stanley was too clever not to know her own business

best, and then Wainwright might not be quite such a lucky dog as people thought. Their opinion would have been strengthened if they could have seen her as she muttered: "Bah! How I wish the whole farce were over."

Harry Wainwright called for his father at the appointed time to go with him to Grosvenor Place. He was curious to see this beautiful woman who was about to become his stepmother. He had already made up his mind that she was only marrying his father for his position, and determined to watch her narrowly.

Nothing could have been more gracious than Mrs. Stanley's manner of receiving him. She affected to take a great interest in his engagement, and asked him several questions about his *fiancée*. Sir Charles listened with astonishment. As he said to her afterwards: he had never known a woman draw Harry out so much before.

"My dear Charles, as we are so closely connected, is it not better that we should be firm friends?"

"Of course, Clare! I only said to Harry this

morning that there was nothing more odious than a family quarrel. Still, it will not be necessary for us to see a great deal of him and his wife."

"I wonder what she is like, and whether we shall get on together?"

"This Miss Blossom? I suppose she is the ordinary country girl, of the milkmaid type. But she is not an interesting subject; let us talk about ourselves."

Although she did not say so, Harry Wainwright

was a subject of great interest to Mrs. Stanley. She was resolved to make him fall in love with her, and, in spite of his engagement, had not the slightest doubt that she would succeed. In truth, so far from cementing family friendship, it seemed extremely probable that she would be the cause of a very pretty family quarrel.

Mr. Blossom was a model of a country squire. Nobody in their sane senses could have taken him for anything else. Even when he was sitting in his stall at the theatre he exhaled a scent of the country, which made his neighbours picture him shooting partridges amongst his own turnips. He disliked town life, and if it had not been for his wife and daughter would never have come to London. As it was, he generally spent his days at Lord's or the Oval, unless there was a race meeting within easy distance. But during his present visit he found that he had other duties to perform. He had been obliged to dine with Sir Charles Wainwright, and he had come away with a very poor opinion of his host. He had been taken to a formal dinner-party at Mrs. Stanley's, and had expressed the candid opinion



Mrs. Stanley was inflexible.

afterwards that there was no fool like an old fool, which was not flattering to the baronet.

"I tell you what, Janet," he said to his wife one evening. "Harry Wainwright is as good a fellow as ever crossed a horse; but how the deuce he came to have such a father is a mystery to me." To which his wife sensibly replied that Maud was going to marry Harry and not his father.

To Maud Blossom, however, this visit was one of continuous pleasure. She was proud of having Harry Wainwright for an escort. Mrs. Stanley had been more than polite to her, and would insist on calling to take her driving in the park, on bringing her home to lunch, and on rendering those thousand and one little civilities which pave the way to friendship between women. Maud was far too innocent to detect the treason which lay hidden in the heart of her new acquaintance.

But it was Ascot week, and the Cup day had arrived, the day which society has chosen as the meridian of the London season. Sir Charles had dressed himself with more than ordinary care for the great festival, and the result was a triumph of the tailor's art; but he was far from pleased at the arrangement which had been made for the day.

"Clare knows how I hate anything like a family party!" he said to himself, as he slung his field-glass over his shoulder; "yet she insists on asking the Blossoms to join us. Then she is perpetually telling me to do the agreeable to Maud, while she talks to Harry. Confound it all! I wish I were married! I'll take good care that we have none of this nonsense at Winterford."

The truth was that Mrs. Stanley, having determined to make Harry Wainwright fall in love with her, had already commenced a flirtation with him under the guise of friendship. Both to him and to Maud she represented herself as an *amicus curiæ*, anxious to prevent any family quarrel; and so she got rid of the somewhat tiresome attentions of Sir Charles, won Harry's confidence, and checked any distrust on Maud's part. She knew beforehand that her married life could not possibly be a happy one, and that it was her policy to have her stepson on her side in the future disagreements between herself and her husband, which were certain to take place.

Why describe Royal Ascot, with its royal procession, its royal enclosure, its crowd of the best-dressed worshippers at the shrine of fashion? Has it not been written in the chronicles of English institutions? Do we not all know it, from the duchess in the latest production of Worth's, to the welshe's clerk, with his hawk eye on the look-out for fools? Let us therefore confine our attention to our story. Many were the field-glasses pointed in the direction of Mrs. Stanley: many critical eyes looked at the beauty of the season. One man evidently took a special interest in her. Although he was backing horses for large amounts in Tattersall's ring, yet when his attention was not taken up with racing,



To take her driving in the park.

he was always looking at Mrs. Stanley with a puzzled expression on his face. That he was a well-known man in betting circles was apparent from the deference shown to him by the bookmakers, not a few of whom wondered at his present absent-minded manner. At last this leviathan among backers beckoned to a quietly-dressed man, and talked earnestly to him for some two minutes. The quietly-dressed man listened, occasionally nodded his head, but never spoke a word until his companion had finished, when he merely said: "All right."

"Then I shall see you to-morrow at seven?" enquired the backer.

"Yes," replied the quietly-dressed gentleman; and they parted as mysteriously as they had met.

Meanwhile, Sir Charles Wainwright, as he had predicted, was spending a very unhappy day. Both Mr. and Mrs. Blossom took an unaffected interest in horseflesh, and made constant excursions to the paddock, leaving the rest of the party to amuse themselves.

Now, as a crowd of friends and acquaintances were always hovering round Mrs. Stanley, and as that lady also took care to keep Harry Wainwright at her side, Sir Charles was obliged to attend to Maud, and to suffer

the pangs of jealousy at the same time. Maud Blossom belonged to the class of unsophisticated country girls for whom Sir Charles had no admiration; so when he had laid two "ponies" to one on the favourite for the Cup, and seen it beaten by a short head, what little good temper he did possess had taken wings and flown away from him.

"Harry," he said petulantly to his son, "I am afraid I must ask you to take care of Maud for a few minutes, as I have to go into the ring."

It must be remembered that Sir Charles' love for Clare Stanley partook more of the nature of pride than of affection. If she had not been the centre of admiration he would never have given her a moment's thought. But as some men are ambitious to ride the most showy horse in the Row, so others are ambitious to be engaged to the most beautiful woman of the season. Such was the case with Sir Charles; so it was extremely galling to him that Clare should give him the cold shoulder at such a place as Ascot. He thought that society would notice it, and so it did.

"I say, Mrs. Stanley doesn't seem to be very spoony on her elderly beau, does she? Who is the young fellow with her?"

"Oh! that's young Wainwright, her future step-son."

The first speaker whistled in surprise.

"He's all right. He is one of those sporting chaps who would like to spend their lives shooting big game in the Rockies. Besides, he is engaged to be married himself."

"Is he? Then I pity the girl."

This, and much more, said society.

But Harry Wainwright had no suspicion of the remarks which were being made about him. Mrs. Stanley had told him that she wished to lessen the breach between him and his father! She had been very kind to Maud, to whom she had told the same tale. So if she did not deceive the scandal-loving world, she deceived this innocent pair. Partially, though not altogether, she deceived her Sir Charles when they returned home.

"I don't know what I have done, Clare, but you would hardly speak a word to me to-day."

"And I thought I was doing exactly as you wished. If you want to spoon in public like John Thomas and Mary Jane——"

"Don't be absurd. You know what I mean. You would not let me come near you, and, worse still, made me look after that milkmaid."

"Now, Charles, you have lost your money and are cross. At least, you have me all to yourself now."

She kissed him as she spoke, and soon coaxed him into a good temper.

"Wait till we are united, love, then we can see as



"Don't be absurd."

little of our Phyllis and Strephon as we choose. Now, Charles, say you are not angry with me before you go."

"Men were deceivers ever." So sang the Bard of Avon three hundred years ago. *Tempora, mutantur*: times change, and so do human beings.

Mr. Carte, of Chicago, the leviathan amongst backers on the turf, sat in his private room in a private hotel in Albemarle Street at seven o'clock on the evening following the Cup day, waiting for the quietly-dressed gentleman. It was the first year that Mr. Carte had patronised the English turf, and certain bookmakers hoped it would be his last. He had come over with plenty of dollars and a system, the system had succeeded and the dollars had increased! Socially he had confined himself entirely to racing circles, and had not even evinced any ambition to enter the precincts of clubland. This was the reason why he had not seen Mrs. Stanley before the previous day, but now that he had seen her she occupied a considerable share of his thoughts.

"Well, Dick," said Mr. Carte, as the quietly-dressed gentleman entered the room, whom we will introduce as Richard Lee, "it has been a glorious week; another regular knock-down blow for the ring, my lad. Pleasure first and business afterwards. Come to dinner—I am as hungry as a cowboy."

Dinner is a lengthy affair amongst racing men who are obliged to be abstemious during the day, and it was after eleven before the two friends returned to Albemarle Street. An hour was spent in going through the betting-book. Then, throwing himself into an arm-chair with an air of relief, Carte said:

"And now, Dick, how about this Mrs. Stanley?"

"She is Nell Robinson, widow of Jack Robinson, who was shot down Texas way some two years ago."

"I more than suspected that yesterday; but how the thunder has she managed to come over here and raise Cain in society?"

"Well, she is the cutest woman I ever ran across. Her beauty speaks for itself."

"I know all that. But who was Stanley? And where did she get the shekels from? I don't know much about society, but I do know this, that American widows don't catch on unless they are considerably gilded."

"Then if you want to find out that, you will have to trace her career since Jack Robinson's death. Personally I don't suppose that Stanley ever existed, except in the lady's imagination. All I know is that she came over to England at the beginning of the year, and was run by a certain Lady Highclass, who seems to be a bit of a boss. But what is the good of finding out? You don't want to spoil the woman's game, do you?"

"Certainly not; unless there was something to be gained by it."

"What can you gain? You don't want money."

"I don't know, but useful information is always worth something or other. Let me see, you went down into the Argentine for a few years or so, after the Robinson affair, so couldn't know anything about her."

Dick Lee nodded.

"Who is this Sir Charles Wainwright, whom she is going to marry? He is not one of the regular racing fraternity."

"Man about town," the other answered laconically.

"Got any shekels?"

"Yes, and a country seat called Winterford."

"Fancy Nell Robinson as a baronet's wife and the mistress of an old English country house! By Jove,

I've hit it! Sir Charles shall go on the turf, and I'll manage his horses."

Carte was so pleased at the idea, that he did not



She tore open the note.

notice the look on Dick Lee's face. If he had, his joy would not have been as boisterous as it was. He talked exultingly for some minutes as he fancied himself as owner of racehorses. He might have fancied himself a member of the Jockey Club, if Lee had not suddenly interrupted him.

"You seem to ignore the consent of Sir Charles."

"Bother Sir Charles! He would consent, to prevent the exposure of his wife. Or I might approach the wife first, and she would coax him into consenting, to save herself."

"Both contingencies are extremely improbable."

"What do you mean?"

"Simply that you have nothing to expose. Listen to the case. You happen to know that Lady Wainwright is the widow of an American gambler, and you disclose the fact to her husband, who is probably aware of it already, demanding as a price of your secrecy that he should enter into a racing partnership with you. He would either laugh at you, or have you horse-whipped. So much for the first contingency! The second is worse. The lady would defy you to do your worst, and ring the bell for you to be shown out of the house."

"Then I would let society know what sort of woman it has made its idol."

"Society would not believe you, in the first place, and you would gain nothing by it, in the second. You might have some influence if you chose to make a complaint to the Jockey Club, but you are powerless to make a complaint against a reigning beauty."

"But how did she get her money? The woman must have some secret."

"Probably she has," replied Dick Lee curtly. "But then you don't happen to know it."

"I must say you don't seem very keen on the matter."

"Because I don't see anything to be got out of it. Sorry to destroy that charming castle you were building in the air, but there is not the slightest chance of its ever having an earthly foundation. Take my advice, and think no more about it. I must be off to bed now; meet you at breakfast. Good-night!"

But Dick Lee did not go to bed. He sat up smoking and thinking till the first streaks of dawn lit up his room. In the stillness of the night many plans suggested themselves to his mind, only to be tossed aside as worthless as soon as they were formed. On one point only was he satisfied, namely, that he had put Carte off the scent of Mrs. Stanley's history. He alone of all men in London knew that history, but he was doubtful how to make use of his knowledge, or, indeed, whether to make use of it at all.

"If I were sure she would be happy, her secret should die with me," he said to himself more than once. Strange thought for the hero of over fifty duels. If it had been expressed aloud, nobody who knew the man would have believed in its sincerity. Could this be the same Dick Lee who had beaten the Red Indian in cunning; who was the dearest shot in the Southern States; who had never been known to spare either man or woman? But he had never shown to any living creature the one deep wound in his heart. Until that day he had thought himself that it was cured, but now it was bleeding as copiously as ever. The love which he had deemed dead was again full of life; but how different was the nature of that life! What had been passion was now compassion; jealousy had become generosity; the burning ardour of the man was changed into the tenderness of a child.

Mr. and Mrs. Blossom, having enjoyed their annual visit to London in their own peculiar fashion, left town, and also left their daughter behind them. Maud was now the guest of Mrs. Stanley, much to the disgust of Sir Charles, who, with the selfishness of all lovers, whether they be twenty-one or eighty-one, wanted to monopolise the society of his fiancée. Mrs. Stanley, however, thinking that she should have as much of Sir Charles' society after marriage as she wanted, had elevated Harry Wain to the position of her "tame cat."

It was a proof of the woman's cleverness that she had done this without exciting the jealousy of Maud. London life, with its dissipations—its Hurlingham, its Sandown, its dances in Mayfair, and its "At Homes," in Belgravia—were such novelties to the country girl, that her mind was in a constant state of bewilderment, and she never paused to consider that her lover's attentions were becoming daily less ardent. Even if she had had any doubts about Harry Wainwright, Mrs. Stanley would have instantly dispelled them during those curl-paper confidences which women love to indulge in.

"My dear Maud, Harry's devotion is really too tiresome. He sat out two waltzes with me to-night, while you were dancing with Lord Pelham, and his conversation consisted of Maud, Maud, Maud, nothing but Maud."

Then the girl's eyes would brighten. She had thought at the time that Harry might have been more attentive to her, now she blamed herself for thinking him wanting in devotion. Certainly Mrs. Stanley ought to have been satisfied at the success of her deception.

We are told that Circe was the daughter of the sun, and that by means of the heat which she inherited from her sire, she was enabled to make the sons of men burn with a consuming passion. There can be no doubt that the ancient Greeks were right, except that they omitted to state that Circe was not the only daughter of the sun. For certain it is that Clare Stanley had managed to make more than one man fall in love with her. And yet she was not happy.

She knew that she was on the verge of a precipice and that at any moment she might be hurled into the chasm of shame beneath. But this she had known when she had started on her adventurous career, and this was the reason why she wished to hasten her marriage with Sir Charles, and to make Harry Wainwright her lover, so that he might protect her in her future troubles. Her social success had been greater than she had ever anticipated. But she had sacrificed her love at the altar of her ambition, and had found out in the quiet moments of her solitude that the artificial veneer had not stifled the woman's heart with which Nature had endowed her.

She was sitting one July afternoon in her boudoir thinking of her old life, and feeling some little remorse that she had ever forsaken it. It was not the life in Texas that she was dreaming of, but of the two years which succeeded it—two years spent with the husband whom she loved, amongst the most luxurious scenery of South America—two years of unbroken bliss.

Where was that husband now? Was he alive or dead?

She was alone. Maud had gone with some new friends to a *matinée*, and Sir Charles was in the city on business. Suddenly Harry Wainwright was announced.

She received him with her usual fascinating manner—a manner which was charming him on to his destruction as it had charmed many before.

The man sat down beside her on the sofa, and yielded himself up to her influence. Occasionally his conscience had smitten him about Maud, and then he would drown conscience in wine.

Now the voice of conscience was dumb: he drank in every word which came from her lips; he gazed upon her beauty and was intoxicated by it.

"Clare, my friendship, my love is yours," he said as he bent over her. "My darling—"

A knock at the door arrested his words, and a servant entered with a note. Mrs. Stanley looked at the handwriting, and turned as pale as death.

"There is a man waiting for an answer, madam."

She tore open the note, and quickly read the contents. Then she went to her writing desk.

"I will be with you at the time you mention," was all she wrote, and, addressing the envelope, handed it to the servant.

"Clare, darling, what has made you worried?"

She rose angrily.

"What right have you to call me darling? You, who are engaged to another woman. No, Harry," she added, more softly, "forgive me, for it has been my fault. Leave me now; forget me and all that you have



Two people . . . are sitting side by side.

said to me. It is not too late. Go to Maud. She loves you and believes in you. Your place is by her side. This infatuation for me will be past in a day, and your love for Maud will be stronger. Go now. I wish to be alone."

He went out without a word. The dream was over. The veil was lifted from his eyes.

What was the note which had caused this sudden change in Clare Stanley? Merely:

"Meet me in the Broad Walk at Kensington at six.—Dick."

It was already five o'clock. There was no time to be lost. She hastily changed her elaborate tea-gown for a plain serge dress, and was soon being whirled down to Kensington. She had had no minutes even for thought. Her brain was too dizzy to enable her to judge how to act.

She trembled as she walked up the Broad Walk, glancing nervously about her. At last a quietly-dressed gentleman stepped out from behind one of the huge trees.

"Nell!"

"Dick!"

Dick Lee held out his hand and she took it, though her eyes were downcast. They walked along a few yards in silence.

"Nell," the man began, and there was a note of the saddest compassion in his voice, "I am not here to reproach you, nor to molest you in any way. I only want you to answer me one question. Are you happy?"

"I am the most miserable creature on earth," she replied, sobbing.

They strolled away from the madding crowd, though few would have recognised them as the society beauty and callous gambler.

"Can you ever forgive me?" she murmured.

"I can and do forgive you. I forgive you so much that if you ask me to leave you now, your secret shall never pass my lips. If you wish me to remain, Nell, it is not too late now to return to the old days of happiness."

"How can I thank you for your generosity? How can I atone to you for the past? I was and am your wife. I will be your slave."

And thus she sacrificed her ambition at the altar of her love and duty.

In the course of the evening Sir Charles Wainwright received the following note, together with presents which he had made Mrs. Stanley:

DEAR SIR CHARLES.—Circumstances have occurred which render it imperative on my part to break off our engagement. I am

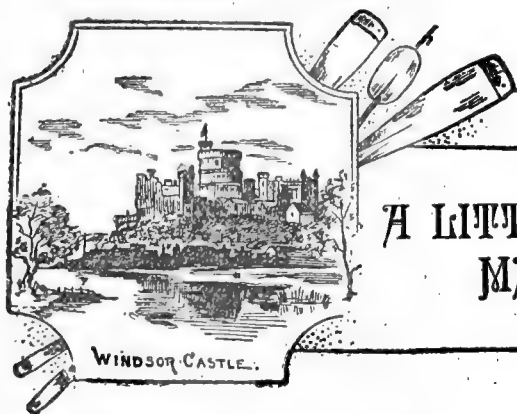
sorry for any pain that this letter may cause you, but you would have suffered more if I had married you. Do not try to see me, as henceforth I am dead to society. Wishing you happiness in the future, I am, yours sincerely,

CLARE STANLEY.

The scene is Goodwood. Sir Charles is there, looking five years older than he did at Ascot. Harry Wainwright is there, telling his friends that he means to be married before the commencement of the hunting season. Mr. Carte is there, though without his late companion. Society is there, inventing tales wide of the truth about the disappearance of its late idol.

The scene is the deck of an Atlantic liner. Two people, whom the passengers have agreed to be a newly-married couple, are sitting side by side. Love is visible in the face of both; but in the face of the man it arises from the sense of protection, in the face of the woman from heartfelt gratitude.

G. F. U.



A LITTLE FISHER MAIDEN.



"Six pairs."

"Long ones, ten buttons, and Suèdes."

"You can choose for yourself."

"Done."

"Oh! You will back out."

"I?" indignantly. "No, indeed! I have been longing for it for days."

"All right, then, I take the bet."

"Halloa!" chimed in a third voice from the other end of the room, "what are you two up to now?"

The girl laughed.

"I thought you were too deep in politics to be listening," she said, "but if you want to know, Stanley has just bet me six to one—"

"That she won't walk down the Rue Grande at noon-day in the fisher-girl costume she admires so much," interrupted Stanley.

Percy Rivers threw his paper on the ground, rose, and crossed the room.

"What nonsense is this?" he asked sternly, facing his younger brother and sister.

Ethel shrugged her shoulders.

"You are always a spoil sport, Percy," she said plaintively. "It is as dull as ditch-water with you stepping in to stop every bit of fun. Where's the harm in this? I dare say, for all your long face and priggish manner, that you had plenty of larks in your time."

Percy's brows grew sterner.

"Am I to understand, Ethel," he said, "that you propose masquerading here, in a foreign town?"

Ethel nodded.

"Call it what you like," she said doggedly, "I am going to dress up as a fisher-girl; the costume is most becoming. Stan can withdraw his bet; I shall do it just the same."

"I forbid you, Ethel."

A defiant look answered him.

"We'll see," she said saucily. "I'm off to consult madame," and with a glance at Stanley, she left the room.

"How could you be so senseless, Stanley?" said his brother angrily, as the door closed. "Now she will carry out this ridiculous farce."

"Don't fly into a passion, Percy," returned the young fellow calmly. "I had no idea she was really in earnest."

Then his senior paced the floor.

"After all, it is nothing very dreadful."

"When does this mad performance take place?" asked Percy, stopping short.

Stanley shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, Ethel will settle that."

"Look here," said Percy grimly, "I wash my hands of you both, but I depend on you, Stanley, to keep her out of any scrape this tomfoolery leads to."

"All right, old fellow, but you can be easy. Ethel won't come to grief."

Miss Rivers, in the meanwhile, was closeted in madame's sanctum behind the shop.

The Lenoirs were jewellers, but mother and daughter would have found their incomes precarious enough without the money accruing from the first and second floors, now occupied by the Rivers.

It was policy, therefore, to be obliging; so, though Mme. Lenoir was shocked at the proposed escapade, and inwardly apostrophised the English as a "mad lot," she expressed great interest.

"I think I can find mademoiselle the dress she requires," she said, all smiles and smirks.

"You dear woman!" exclaimed Ethel delighted. "How? Where? Of course, it must be new."

Madame nodded.

"Leonie," addressing her daughter, "Josephine would lend hers, eh?"

"What?" cried Leonie shrilly. "Her wedding dress?—never!"

Madame looked at Ethel.

"Mademoiselle would be very careful of it, would she not?" she said.

"Oh, yes," replied the young girl eagerly. "I only want it for an hour. But will it fit me?"

The French woman surveyed Ethel from top to toe critically.

"Yes," she said, "mademoiselle is the same height."

Then, with a wink at Leonie:

"How much will mademoiselle pay for the loan?"

"The cost is the least part," replied the girl quickly. "I leave that to you, dear madame."

Madame's arched eyebrows and hand gesture said plainly: "The folly of those people!" and she instantly resolved to take advantage of the said folly to do a stroke of business on her own account, independently of the "commission" she intended to charge Josephine when the bargain was concluded.

"I will send about the costume at once," she said aloud, "and, Josephine, if she consents, shall bring it to show mademoiselle this evening. It is all complete except—"

"Except what?" interrupted Ethel eagerly, as madame paused, while Leonie looked wonderingly at her mother.

"The long earrings," replied the French woman suavely. "Mademoiselle knows they are an essential part of the dress, and Josephine would not care to lend them—"

"But—" began Leonie.

A frown from madame cut her short.

"Mademoiselle must buy a pair of real gold ones," suggested the shrewd tradeswoman, with a triumphant glance at her daughter; and leading the unresisting Ethel into the shop, she showed her several pairs of handsome earrings.

"You ninny," said madame to Leonie, with a reproofing shake of the head, when Ethel, having selected, ran off with her treasures. "You ninny, will you ever learn to open your mouth for the ripe fruit to tumble in it?"

The Boulognaise fisher-girl proved ready to oblige the English lady, and Ethel was summoned downstairs that evening.

"This is Josephine, Mees Etel," said madame by way of introduction, pointing to a young girl in stiff-brimmed white cap and scarlet petticoat.

"It is very good of you to lend me your dress," said Ethel with a smile.

Josephine began untying a brown-paper parcel.

"See, mademoiselle," she said proudly, placing each article over a chair; "see, everything fresh and new."

"They are your wedding things," said Ethel, fingering the bodice.

The fisher girl reddened.

"We are to be married next week," she said simply.

"And what will Antoine say to your lending your finery?" broke in Leonie's high treble voice.

Josephine's face clouded.

"Hold your tongue," cried madame to her daughter; "Antoine is not such a fool; he will think a handful of francs payment enough."

Josephine looked from one to the other, hesitatingly; but Ethel, unheeding the dispute, slipped on the petticoat.

"Did I not tell

mademoiselle it would be the right size," exclaimed Mme. Lenoir triumphantly, "eh, Josephine?"

But Josephine kept her eyes on the ground.

"Their figures are exactly alike," continued madame, nodding her head in approval at both supple, graceful forms.

Ethel gathered up the rest of the apparel in her arms.

"Stop a moment, mam'selle," said Josephine, touching her. "Antoine is strange; he may be vexed, as Mademoiselle Leonie suggested just now."

"You won't lend them?" Ethel's voice was plaintive.

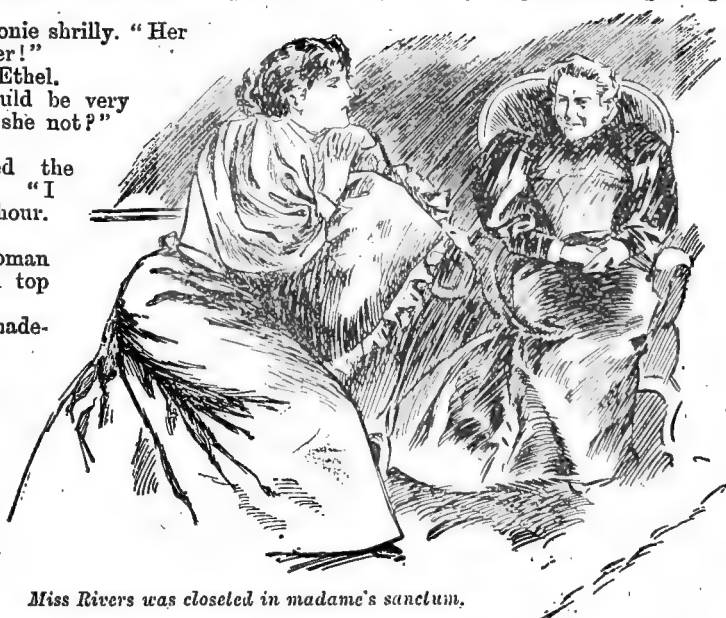
Madame came to her rescue.

"You can't disappoint Mees Etel, after it has been arranged," she said to Josephine. "Antoine need not know unless you are so silly as to tell him, and the money will come in useful."

A smile crept round the corners of Josephine's lips.

"Take the things, mam'selle," she cried; and Ethel, promising to return them the following evening, slipped away.

About eleven o'clock next morning a tap at Stanley's



Miss Rivers was closeted in madame's sanctum.

door made him open it. He stared for a moment, then uttered a long-drawn whistle.

"Well, do I look nice?" demanded his sister gleefully.

"Capital!" and he laughed heartily.

"How did you manage it so soon? But, Ethel," and his tone was serious, "mind your p's and q's, don't look about you."

She nodded.

"I shall go straight down the Rue Grande to the quay, pop in upon the Stuarts, and back again; while I am gone, Stan, you can buy the gloves. *Au revoir!*" And kissing her hand, she descended the stairs.

Percy, coming up, almost knocked against her. He started at the gay apparition. Then he recognised Ethel.

"Good Heavens!" he groaned, but before he could say more the bird had flown into madame's parlour.

Percy hesitated a moment, and walked into Stanley's room.

"What's up?" asked the young man.

"I have just met Ethel in that fisher-girl toggery," answered Percy irately. "You will please follow her

and see that she does not get into mischief, do you hear?"

But Percy, returning to his study, could not settle himself to work. Ethel had neither father nor mother; little control as he possessed over her, he was still the responsible party.

The thought of possible insult to his madcap sister so disturbed him that he resolved to go after her himself. An unexpected call, however, detained him from putting his resolution into immediate action.

In the parlour Ethel had been duly admired and flattered.

"But mademoiselle's hands will betray her," said Mme. Lenior. "They

are far too white and delicate. Leonie, fetch a basket. There," as the desired article arrived, "mademoiselle can tuck them under her shawl round the basket. So—that's better."

Thus equipped, Ethel stepped off.

"She is as like Josephine as two peas from behind," said madame, watching the girl.

"If only Antoine does not catch sight of her!" murmured Leonie, with a frown.

Ethel threaded her way through the throng of people usual at that hour of the day in the Rue Grande, and though she looked neither to the right nor to the left she was aware of the many curious glances and smiles directed at her. Her heart beat loudly, partly with excitement, partly fear of recognition or being accosted. She gained the Stuarts' house without molestation.

Husband and wife were just sitting down to the noon breakfast, when a grinning maid ushered in Ethel.

"Ethel," screamed Mrs. Stuart. "What mad freak is this?"

The Captain, who had not penetrated the disguise as quickly as his wife, now looked grave.

"My dear young lady," he said, "how could you do anything so risky?"

Ethel explained the joke, but her friends shook their heads. How could Percy have allowed it?

She sat subdued and dispirited for a few moments, and rose to depart.

"Yes, get back as quickly as you can, you silly child," said Mrs. Stuart.

The return journey had lost its zest; the flavour had gone from the fun. Ethel, as she went swiftly along the quay, was more alive than ever to the comments of the passers-by, and the glances of other fisher-girls.

The bright colour in her cheeks had given place to pallor, a longing to be safe again at home seized her. How far off the Rue Grande was.

Absorbed in herself, she had not noticed a lithe, dark-browed young fisherman following her at a distance, a sinister, jealous gleam in his black eyes.

But as by degrees he came closer, an instinctive feeling warned her of his approach. He tried to see her face, but Ethel looked straight before her.

Turning a corner, she came face to face with Percy. A sigh of relief escaped her; she grasped at his proffered arm. Before she could take it, a strong hand pushed her aside, a glint of steel flashed in the sunlight, a savage oath, and a knife was buried in Percy's shoulder.

Ethel screamed. At the sound the hot-blooded Gascon staggered back, pale and trembling. He stared at her.

"Antoine, you fool," shouted the bystanders who collected at the fray, "you have killed the Englishman! The girl is his sister!"

They carried the injured man to the nearest surgeon.

Fortunately for Ethel's stricken conscience the wound was not dangerous. During Percy's tedious convalescence she was a devoted nurse, but she never thinks of that day without a shudder at the possible consequences of that woeful wager.

H. W.

RESULT OF "PICTURE STORY" COMPETITION.—No. 4.

THE £5 prize has gone to Sam Belchambers, 145, Gloucester Road, Regent's Park, N.W.

£1 has been sent to each of the following:

James Matthews, "The Elms," Newbury, Berks.

W. A. Lewis, Harrogate Cottage, Yorkshire.

Mrs. H. Fox, 6, Barnard Road, Cloughton, Birkenhead.

Allen Grace, 37, Kennington Park Road, Newington, S.E.

Ernest Coulson, 4, St. Andrew's Street (North), Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk.

THE WINNING ATTEMPT. A MODERN ELOPEMENT.

1.

The fair Angelina walked out with her tike,
And her crusty, tyrannical father;
Alphonso, her lover, drew near on his bike,
At a pace that was furious, rather.

2.

The pair, though forbidden, had vowed to be matched,
So Alphonso flew after the daughter;
A saddle in front of his bike he'd attached,
And on nearing her, skilfully caught her.

3.

"Stop thief!" cried the dad—"what the dickens is up?"
Not a moment the two lovers tarried,
But leaving behind them the dad and the pup,
They were off like a shot, to be married!



Percy could not settle himself to work.

delicate. Leonie, fetch a basket. There," as the desired article arrived, "mademoiselle can tuck them under her shawl round the basket. So—that's better."

Thus equipped, Ethel stepped off.

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THE SHADOW-HAND

BY
LIVIS
TRACY.

SUMMARY.

PROLOGUE.—The Hon. Ernest Wentworth lies dying at his estate, Chisholme Park. His wife, a light, pleasure-loving creature, falls under the mesmeric influence of Armand Lemaitre, who, by force of will power, compels her to rob her husband. While in the act of extracting a bundle of notes from a bureau she is interrupted by the appearance of her husband, who enters the room in his bed-clothes, silently points at her with his fore-finger, and then falls down dead. She shortly afterwards leaves for Paris to join Lemaitre.

Nineteen years elapse. Edith Wentworth, who was adopted when a baby by Lord Hilton, is living at Hillcrest Lodge. Among the guests for Christmas are Cécile Delisle, a school-friend of Edith's, Professor Queech, Jack Heathcote, and Captain Arthur Musgrave. At York, on the journey down from King's Cross, Cécile observes that the carriage next to theirs contains a man and a woman. At their destination, a few miles further on, she notices a strange man there alone.

Lemaitre, alias Dr. Danton, arrives at the house as a guest, and exercises an influence over Edith that arouses the jealousy of Arthur, who strikes Danton, and agrees to fight a duel.

A murder is committed at Thorhill Beck. The body of a woman is discovered by one of Farmer Wilson's sons. Cécile deduces from the description of the body that it has been robbed. She visits the spot, and obtains the jewellery from the boy who first discovered the body.

In the duel between Danton and Musgrave only one of the pistols is loaded. Danton is lucky enough to draw the loaded one, but gives Musgrave an opportunity of leaving Hillcrest Lodge, never to return or to speak to Edith. This proposal is refused, with scorn. As the Doctor is about to fire, Cécile comes between the principals. In order to obviate further trouble Arthur agrees to Danton's conditions, and immediately leaves Hillcrest Lodge. Cécile makes appointments with both Edith and Arthur to meet her, the one in a country lane and the other at an inn. She induces Arthur to drink a good deal, and then sends him away in such a direction that he must of necessity pass Edith, whom he speaks to in defiance of his pledge.

CHAPTER IX.

DEATON RACES.

WHAT should he do?

He lay in bed in the morning after the meeting in the lane, and looked round the room.

There was his sword; there were his pistols. How should he die? Live he could not.

"What a drunken fool!" he said aloud, his fine, nervous lips curving in unspeakable scorn of himself. Many times he said it:

"What a drunken ass!"

He, a man of noble blood, an officer in Her Majesty's Army, had broken his word, solemnly plighted—and plighted, people would say, to save his life. If it were known he would be hissed from the army, he would be hounded from the society of every decent man. His first instinct, on opening his eyes, was to rip up his bowels with his sword.

"A poor drunken clown!" he said, pitying himself, almost crying for scorn and self-shame. To be ruined like that, utterly and for ever, by punch!—how bestially ludicrous! By a little mad French girl! How wildly grotesque!

What should he do? What could he do? That question a thousand times over, he asked himself.

Suddenly he was resolved. He jumped from the bed, and rang. Tom Wilson, already a creature of buttons and livery, showed his sullen face.

"Look to that busby," said Arthur, "and my boots, and

spurs. Have you made the lather as I told you for shaving?"

"Aye," said Tom.

"At the end of every answer you give use the word 'sir,' will you?"

"I doan't know."

"Don't know what?"

"I doan't know as I shall."

"We will look into that together, Tom. I am sure Miss Delisle would wish you to be respectful."

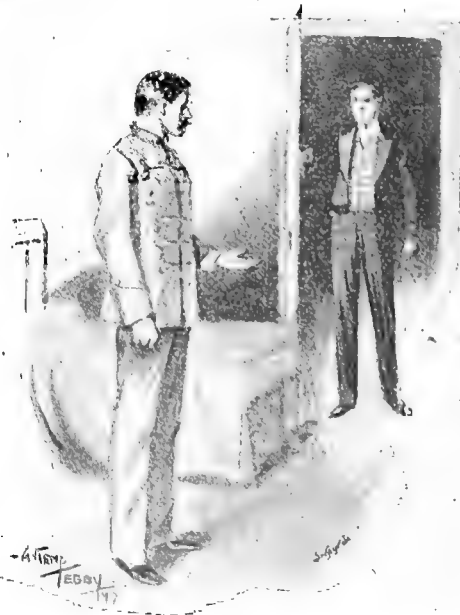
"A'll ask her aboot thot, if 'oo doan't mind waitin'."

"But you won't have time to consult her about every trifle of your duty, you know. Meantime, leave me as soon as you can."

When the Captain was dressed, he sat in the outer room and wrote the following letter, his face perfectly calm, his hand steady:

SIR,—Owing to circumstances almost beyond my control, I have broken my word in the matter of which you know. And I cannot even now promise that the relation set up by this breach of faith will, as far as I am concerned, cease for the future, things having gone to such a point between me and the lady in question. Meanwhile, of course, my existence is entirely at your disposal, and I await your instructions. I may tell you that I have resolved not to take my own life, but in all other respects,—I am yours to command,
ARTHUR MUSGRAVE.

He directed the letter to "Dr. Danton, Hillcrest Lodge, Seaborough—To be forwarded," and sent Tom Wilson to post it.



Tom Wilson . . . showed his sullen face.



They sat in little groups . . . playing nap.

But the perfect calm which all through the day concealed the agony that boiled and rankled in his heart, broke up towards night. At eight his rooms were full of a company of drinking officers, and Arthur was then in a high fever of uproarious gaiety.

They sat in little groups round tables about the rooms playing nap. Brandy and champagne was the order of the day.

At Arthur's table the stakes went up from shillings to pounds. The rooms were full of smoke and hubbub, and the night grew old towards morning.

"What's the matter with Musgrave to-night?" said Pete Pearson, a sallow, thin fellow, with a high nose, and retreating chin, and goggle eyes, "he's suddenly broken loose, looks like."

Pendragon glanced at Arthur, and saw him holding high a champagne glass, laughing loud with throat thrown back.

"I shall ride that mare to victory, by God, or shoot her!" he cried, his voice rising high above the tumult of the room.

"I think it'll be a case of shooting, then," said Pete Pearson. "My money's going on Filigree."

"Oh, I don't know," said Jack Lascelles, a mere boy, with incipient moustache, and hair combed up high at the temples. "I rather like Musgrave's mare. She can go, you know, if she's coaxed. And she knows him. I've put a pony on her."

"It may be good punning, my boy, but bad business," answered Evelyn Hardy, whose thin-haired head gave out a continual odour of the patent hair-restorers, with which he waged an agonised war against the coming baldness. "Neither Filigree nor the mare is good enough for my hard-earned subsistence. What about the little Frenchman, then?"

"What, Bon-gré?" sneered Jack Lascelles. "It's wonderful what things people who have had no long experience of the turf will pitch upon as likely to win a decent race. I've seen Bon-gré, if you want to know; I've run my hand over his haunches. He isn't a horse—he's an insect."

"He's an insect with wings, then," said Evelyn Hardy, and he's going to make money for whoever chooses to patronise him. I think a fellow should know what he's talking about."

"But who the deuce is it owns Bon-gré? A French fellow, isn't it?" asked Pete Pearson.

"Yes, a financial sort of medico character. I was at the stables last Friday," said Lascelles. "His name is Danton." Pendragon started.

At this point Arthur's voice was heard again. He had risen, flushed, to his feet.

"I shall put every penny I am worth on her, I tell you," he cried, his face stern, with frowning brows, and eyes alight.

"Bravo!" cried someone, "and so shall I."

"I already stand involved to the extent of £30,000 on her. To-morrow, at this time, the amount shall be double! If any one thinks—"

Pendragon went and laid his hand on his shoulder.

"*Festina lente*, my dear boy," he said. "It is time to go to bed."

Arthur sat down and emptied another glass.

CHAPTER X.

HAWKE AND LEMAITRE.

ABOUT this very time two men were closeted together in a private room in a London hotel. One of them was a squat man, very bulky about the back and shoulders, with massive arms. His face was bronzed; but his chin-beard was gone, though it was the man whom Cécile had seen mysteriously standing in the railway compartment on the day of the murder. His mean, shabby clothes had now given place to a frock-coat, a gaudy tie with a diamond pin, fashionably-cut trousers, gold chain, and diamond ring.

Opposite him, on the other side of a small table, lounged the great bulk of Dr. Lemaitre.

"How much is it you want?" asked Lemaitre.

"A paltry two hundred."

"Ah! That will make three hundred in three weeks, Hawke."

"But that's nothing to a man such as you, mate."

"Not, eh? Suppose I tell you that at this moment I haven't got fifty pounds in the world?"

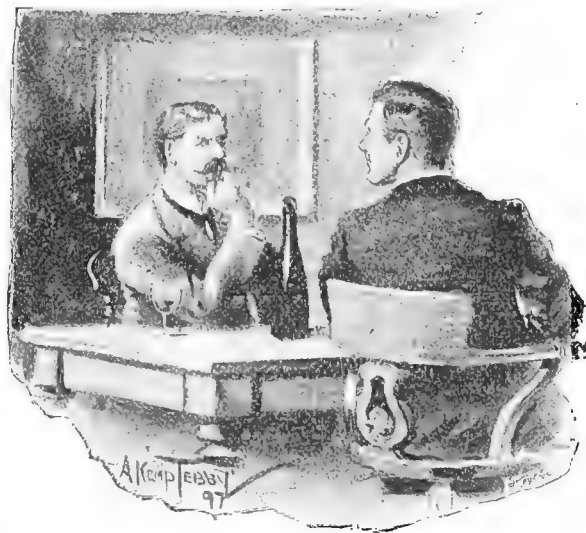
"Must find it, mate. I ain't what you'd call an unreasonable man, you know. Some people 'ud work a secret like this I have got of yours for all it was worth. All I want now is a paltry two hundred just to go on with."

"Well—have some more brandy—I cannot give it you, Mr. Hawke. Suppose I promise you five hundred in three weeks' time instead?"

The Doctor stroked his imperial and looked sideways at the brutal face of Hawke.

"Three weeks? Why, man alive, you don't expect me to wait all that time! If you was hanging for three weeks you'd be pretty dead at the end of it, I suppose."

Lemaitre got suddenly angry. He leant forward and stared at the man.



"How much is it you want?"

"Come, learn your place, sir! Remember what you were, and what I have made you. You never had two hundred pence in your life till a lucky chance appeared to put me a little in your power. You must wait!"

"Appeared to put you a little in my power?" laughed Hawke. "Oh, that's good! Why, I can make you swing, mate, by just walking down the stairs and saying two words to the nearest policeman."

"You would lose your income. And you would have no proof of your tale."

"No proof? Well, that's only your little joke, I suppose. Why, wasn't I under the carriage seat all the time, and see you do the whole job?"

"But there would be only your word for it, and the police already know the value of your word, I should imagine. But how the devil came you to be under that seat that day? Have some more?"

Lemaitre had assumed his careless, friendly tone.

"Well, to tell the truth," said Hawke, "I wanted to get to Seaboro' to see a pal, and as I didn't have a copper to pay the fare, I had to go the distance under the seat. You can't get under a third-class seat, you know; but you can under a first."

"It was a lucky trip for you, I think?"

"It was, I own to that. And for you, too. For, if I wasn't there to tell you to get out on the wrong side of the train at the small half-way station, you would have gone on, sure enough, to Seaboro'. You were so flurried like. And that would have been dangerous."

"Why?"

"Cause a lot of people got out at Seaboro', and some of them, sure enough, must ha' seen you with the lady beforehand: if you hadn't got out at the small station, some of them would have seen you at Seaboro' without her: and when they heard of the body——"

"Quite so. I understand. You know your trade, Mr. Hawke."

"Oh, as for that, no one can say as I haven't got my wits about me. The p'lice themselves 'ud tell you that. Do you know I think they are after me for this affair?"

"Is that so?" asked Lemaitre eagerly.

"I fancy so. There's a chap called Wheeler, who's got the case in hand, and I know he thinks it was I as did it. It was he who got me the seven years' hard I told you about. And I know he's been making enquiries about me lately."

"They musn't get you!" cried Lemaitre, leaning forward. "Und rstand that, Hawke! You may have been seen getting out of the compartment at Seaboro', and that alone would certainly convict you, unless you told the whole story—and so lost your income."

"And made you swing," put in Hawke.

"Look here—what do you say?—I think you had better leave the country," said Lemaitre. "Disguise yourself, and get away to Paris."

"It's all very well for you to talk, mate," cried Hawke, "but how am I to go kicking up my heels at Paris without money? You say you've got none."

"Not now; I shall have plenty in three weeks' time."

"I see. Well, I guess I'll stick pretty close to you during those three weeks. But I'm keeping low all the time. I shan't be nabbed. See, I've shaved my beard. I know all about Wheeler's little dodges, and can go one better every time, you bet. I suppose it's those Drayton races you're thinking of, where you're going to make your pile, ain't it?"

Lemaitre nodded.

"S'pose you lose?"

A look of intense fierceness passed for a moment over Lemaitre's face.

"I must not lose," he said.

"Your horse is Bon-gré, ain't it?"

"Yes."

"And everything depends on his winning, don't it?"

"Yes."



"And mind you don't get nabbed."

"How much do you expect to win?"

"About £20,000."

This was a lie. He counted on winning not less than £50,000.

"And how can you tell that Bon-gré's so sure to win?" asked Hawke.

"He must. No one knows his powers but me and Simpson. We have kept it dark. But he is made of lightning. He must win. He *shall* win!"

He spoke—more to himself than to Hawke—with an intensity of earnestness.

"Well, I don't know," answered Hawke, "he *may* lose, you know. Simpson's your jockey, ain't he?"

"Yes."

"Bon-gré has won a race before, I think you said, ain't he?"

"Yes. The *Grande Nationale*, in Paris. But under a different name. No one knows he's the same."

"And what are the chief horses you've got against you?"

"They are nothing at all. I tell you Bon-gré is made of lightning, man! He bounds like a wave of the sea. He is not a horse, he is a spirit—an idea. He is bottled flight. He is swiftness made visible in the flesh."

"Ah, that's all very fine, I dare say; but what horses 've you got against you?"

"There is Filigree, the Duke of Grandford's horse. A very good horse, but a mere clod-hopper compared to Bon-gré. He will come in second, I am told."

"That all?"

"There are about eight others. The best of them is Lancet, Captain Musgrave's mare. She'll slip in third."

"He the man you fought the duel with?"

Lemaitre started violently.

"Mr. Hawke! Mr. Hawke!" he said, lowering under his eyes, "you know too much of my affairs! It is dangerous, Mr. Hawke."

"I ain't afraid," said Hawke.

"I can take you off like *that*," said Lemaitre, with a snap-away of his thumb and finger.

"Now, mate, don't talk like that. I'm all right," said Mr. Hawke coldly. "You didn't think I knew that little bit, did you? Why I had you under my eye every day while you were at that—what's the name of the place? I saw the whole duel from behind the trees. And wasn't I just frightened you might get hit, too! I watched over you like a mother."

Lemaitre's head and cruel eyes rested upon Hawke with inward musing. But he did not speak.

"I suppose it was all about a woman," said Hawke.

Lemaitre nodded, musing upon Hawke.
 "And you won her?"
 "Yes."
 "Going to marry her?"
 "Yes."
 "Suppose you lose the race."
 "Hold your tongue."
 "Well, but how about this money business, mate? Business is business, ain't it?"
 "I will give you £25 till the day of the races."
 "And how much on that day?"
 "£500."
 "Say £1,000 for luck."
 Lemaitre looked at him, and said;
 "All right."
 "Well, you've always acted straight to me, I must say," pondered Mr. Hawke. "Give us the money. Where am I to meet you on the race-day?"
 "Near the start."
 "What o'clock?"
 "Say three."
 Lemaitre handed him some notes.
 "And mind you don't get nabbed," he called, as Hawke reached the door.

CHAPTER XI. WON BY A NOSE.

DRAYTON is a town about fifteen miles north-west of Ilminster. Drayton Common lies south of the town, and is said to be one of the finest racecourses in the world.

On the great race-day it presented quite the appearance of Epsom on a Derby event. The presence of the Prince of Wales on the grand-stand—he was staying in the neighbourhood at Lord Westburgh's—made the day momentous in the county. The common was crammed, as well as the roads, for many miles round. The air was full of excitement and speculation.

This excitement was enormously intensified by the confidence which seemed to reign in the three opposing parties into which the betting had divided sportsmen. Each party seemed somehow so sure of its horse. Bon-gré was the favourite, but the adherents of Filigree and Lancet smiled disdainfully at the notion of Bon-gré turning up a winner.

Jack Lascelles, his flushed face lighting up the whole course, appeared early, full of confidence, and striking his fist into his palm, said:

"I tell you, sir, Bon-gré is not a horse. He's a grass-hopper. I've seen him, I tell you; and if a fellow does not know a horse when he sees him, who does?"

At about eleven there was a change in the betting. A rumour got abroad that the Prince of Wales had laid heavily on Filigree.

In an incredibly short time Filigree had replaced Bon-gré as favourite, and with a big swing back, almost like a panic, the bookies dropped from records of two to one to twenty-five to one against Bon-gré.

Lemaitre, alone with Simpson, his jockey, in a room at the stables, rubbed his hands gleefully at the news.

"There is no doubt of our winning, is there?" he said, looking hard at Simpson.

"Not a bit," said Simpson, flicking with his whip his swinging toes, "unless Lancet creeps in before me by a nose."

Simpson was a mere wisp of a man, in the shape of a bow.

"What do you mean?" said Lemaitre quickly.

"Well, you know, Lancet is a bigger hanimal than Bon: a more powerful hanimal. I don't for a minute think myself that she's the ghost of a chance, 'cause Musgrave's such a heavy lout. But Lancet's got the wind, you know, no one can take that from Lancet—give the devil 'is due. And you know what wind will do."

Lemaitre stroked his imperial, with nervous, trembling finger.

"You must win—I hope you will win, Simpson," he said, "I shall make you roll in gold, if you do."
 "Oh, I ain't afraid of Filigree, for that matter," said Mr. Simpson. "But here's off to the course."

About this time there was another panic. There went abroad a rumour that Lancet had been hip strung for two hours during the night, and had only escaped death by a miracle. She was reported to be in a state of great nervous exhaustion that morning. The excitement rose to fever-pitch. Hardly anybody had the least notion whether the report was true or false. The bookies began to refuse to lay odds against Filigree, who was now prime favourite.

But a cheer went up from the course when, Musgrave appeared in red and white on Lancet among the group at the starting post, though some few knowing ones, gifted with accurate eye, said:

"That man's too heavy for that horse, take my word for it."

Musgrave to the last minute was smoking a cigar. His face was perfectly calm.

"But who on earth taught him to ride a racehorse?" said one busy bookie to another.

"Well, you know those cavalry officers who have served out Afghan way. They learn to climb up crags on horses as if they were goats. You can't unseat them from a horse. Whether he's got the science to ride a race is another matter. Personally, I'm thinking he'll make a mess of it."

At this moment the starter's flag went down, and away spurred the variegated throng like a scattered rainbow.

Almost from the first the three favourites put the general mob of horses behind their heels. A silence like the silence of night fell upon the uproar of the mighty crowd. Spy-glasses were the order of the day. The dense masses of humanity that thronged, tier above tier, on the stands, seemed suddenly to break out into a wide eruption of tiny moons which moved round with the moving horses.

A minute from the start Filigree was leading by a neck, Bon-gré was second, and Lancet was throwing herself about a good length behind Bon-gré.

"Good biz," whispered Jack Lascelles, nearly mad with excitement, unconscious of the fact that his great toe was supporting his whole weight; "Fil's in the van, as I said; if you fellows had only had the sense to listen to reason—"

"Looks as if you were right, in truth," said Peterson. "What the deuce has become of Musgrave? He isn't anywhere."

"Poor old Mus!" mused Evelyn Hardy, looking through his glass. "He keeps up pretty well though. Golly! he's got his heels in that horse's ribs, too! What think of it, Pen?"

"I haven't bet a sou on anybody," said Pendragon coolly; "but I can tell you which horse will win."

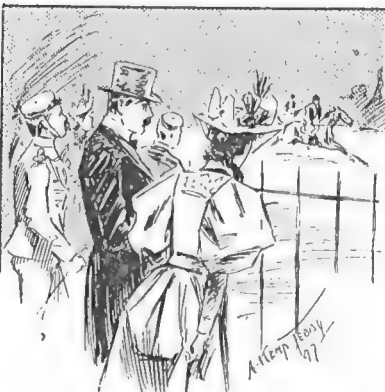
"Which?"

"Lancet. Musgrave's lips are set tight."

"He can set his lips as tight as he likes—"

"But I saw him turn deadly pale just at the start. Arthur Musgrave does not turn pale like that for nothing, I assure you. He evidently means to win."

"By Heaven!"



The air was full of excitement.

cried Jack Lascelles. "Bon-gré has shoved her nose before Filigree! Not bad for the Frenchie. He'll beat a retreat presently, though, you'll see."

"I don't know," mused Peterson. "That Simpson is simply a monkey on his animal. He has no weight. He is merely a human bubble on an equine whirlpool."

"Musgrave is keeping up jolly well, though!" cried Lascelles. "I fancy he's gained a little on Filigree. But, I say! just look at that French horse—why, he's all neck!"

By the time the three leaders had reached the furthest point of the course, Filigree was behind, with Musgrave's Lancet second, and Bon-gré leading by a length.

"It's the Prince has given poor Fil this cursed luck!" said Jack Lascelles with dogmatic certainty. "A prince is sure to lose."

"Bosh! A prince should be lucky," said Peterson.

"Not a bit! It's as much princely to throw money away as it is human to err. I say! Look! Look! Did any of you see

Musgrave bend right down and talk into his horse's ear?"

Pendragon was white with excitement. He nodded.

"Yes, I saw him," he said. "I told you he meant to win. When you have blood in the rider as well as in the horse."

The two front horses had now put the others well behind them. Filigree was nowhere.

The dash home, past the stands, was down a gentle hill. Bon-gré and Lancet, with staring eyes, and horribly heaving flanks, felt that the battle was between them, and flew as if from pursuing fire. The spattering hoofs sped nearer. Bon-gré held a steady neck in front.

"I don't believe Mus has used his whip a single time during the whole run," observed Evelyn Hardy under his breath. "What's the use of a whip, then?"

"And look at Simpson! why, his arm is going like a flail all the blessed time. Why the deuce doesn't Musgrave?"

"I say, you fellows, can any of you see Musgrave's face?" cried Jack Lascelles, "it's like a piece of white iron."

"But why the deuce doesn't he use his whip?"

"He isn't a trained jockey, he isn't accustomed to the whip."

"Hasn't he used it once even?"

"Not once," said Pendragon.

"Then that must be intentional."

"I should think so."

"Do you think he is gaining on Bon-gré, Lascelles? I fancy so."

"Losing, you mean."

"No, gaining, I fancy—yes, surely. I'll swear to it."

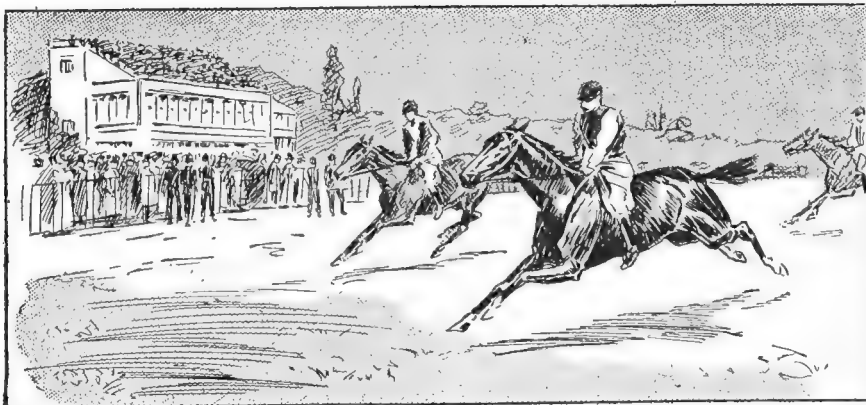
"No—can't you see?"

"No—no—and yet—"

"Bon-gré intends to keep his neck in front. That is clear. Nothing can alter it now."

"Jerusalem! Look! Look! Musgrave has struck!"

Down—for the first time—for the last—in one biting and whistling cut had descended Musgrave's



The two horses were just then dashing and straining past the stands.

whip upon the tingling, throbbing haunch of Lancet.

In that one intense chastisement, the iron wrist had done its work. The next moment, almost with a bound of frenzy, Lancet had her nose in front of Bon-gré's.

From ten thousand throats there burst to the skies one ringing yell of cheering. Pendragon, with bawling mouth, was leaning wildly forward, and waving his hat like a maniac. On all the stands sprang up the thronging multitudes in their gala many-coloured costumes, the Prince among them, shouting, waving handkerchiefs, like a sea whipped into foam and madness.

The two horses were just then dashing and straining past the stands. A moment after, Lancet ran past the post, with Bon-gré's red and snorting nostrils at her shoulder.

Musgrave had won the race.

(To be continued.)

A Paper for Sunday Afternoons.

THE second number of *The Sunday Reader* is now before the public. Judging by the reception with which the first number met, there can be no doubt that this will be one of the literary successes of the century. It is, in fact, the paper for the home. It is suited for all classes and creeds. The articles will please you, the stories will please your wife, and the Bible competitions will not only elevate and instruct your children, but will amuse them for hours together.

You can gain some idea of the good things contained in the second number of *The Sunday Reader* from the following selection of articles. *The Sunday Reader* also contains two splendid short stories, besides a thrilling serial:

A God who Hides upon a Peacock: The most curious idol of famine-stricken India.

Crucifixions of To-day: The horrible cruelties of the King of Benin. Travelling Churches.

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PART VI

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NO. 2.

Cut out the figures portrayed in the sketches contained in this number, and paste them up to form one picture. £2 2s. will go to the reader whose attempt is considered cleverest, and a bottle of *HOMÉ NOTES BOUQUET* to each of the five next. Date of closing: Monday, March 15th, 1897.



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ONE HUNDRED
POUNDS IN PRIZES.

IN the current number of PEARSON'S WEEKLY you will find ten pictures. They represent the names of ten well-known Actors and Actresses on the Dramatic and Music-Hall Stage. This is a competition that requires no explanation. If you will look at the accompanying picture you will see the reply is Beerbohm Tree. Who are the other people?

Write down their names in the spaces provided, and then keep the list till two other sets appear. When you have filled in the lists for four weeks send the four sheets to us in one envelope, addressed

"Pictures," Pearson's, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

But remember the sheets must come to us four in one envelope. Don't be discouraged if you cannot find forty names, fill in thirty-five, thirty, or even less. Others may be no more clever than yourself.

- 1st PRIZE. £50 in Gold.
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21st to 40th PRIZES. . . Twenty Half-Sovereigns.



BEERBOHM TREE.

DO YOU WANT A WATCH?

On February 25th we wound up a watch and placed it in a safe. It was wound up somewhere between the hours of four and six in the afternoon. It is supposed to run down in about thirty-six hours. If you want this watch, which is a superior article manufactured by Mr. HENRY E. PECK, of 71, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C., and sold by him at five guineas, all you have to do is to mark the time at which you think it will stop on the clock face herewith, and on the line left for that purpose. You may make any number of attempts for this prize, but each one must be on a separate clock-face.

It is an English Lever Watch, 14-plate movement, jewelled in eight holes, chronometer balance, plain or engine-turned cases, crystal glass, and five years' warranty is given with each watch.

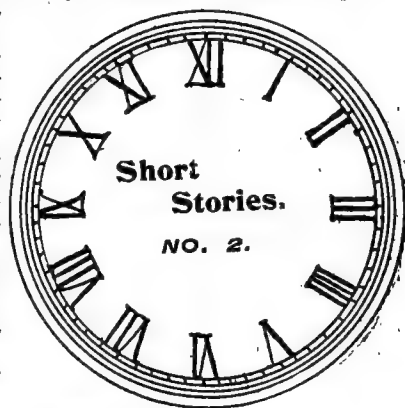
The prize will be given to the competitor who draws the hands pointing most nearly to the hour and minute at which it is found the watch in our safe has stopped. To prevent mistakes, put the time also on the space provided.

There is no entrance fee required, but no competition will be accepted unless traced on the diagram herewith.

In the unlikely event of two competitors being correct, the watch will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt first reaches this office.

Competition closes **Monday, March 15th.** Address attempts:

"WATCH" **Short Stories**, PEARSON'S BUILDINGS, HENRIETTA STREET, LONDON, W.C.



Hour..... Minute.....
Name.....
Address.....

All Competitions must be sent through the Post.

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE WEDDING.

It was in the year 1839, that this young man, rich, gifted and handsome, came to New Orleans to spend a winter with Charles Marot Bauderet, whose acquaintance he had formed in Paris. The two men were of the same age, and their tastes were similar. Verot had been captivated by Bauderet's wit, learning, and subtle personal charm. In turn, Bauderet's imagination was touched into singular activity and his sympathies borne over by Verot's magnetic charm.

It is rare, indeed, two young men, poets both, find such an overmastering mutual interest flowing between them. Their friendship became at once a passion.

When Bauderet left Paris after a year's sojourn there, he exacted a promise from his new friend that he should come to New Orleans and spend some months with him. Thus it came about that early in the autumn of 1839, Verot arrived, after a pleasant voyage, and took up his abode in the Bauderet mansion in Bourbon Street.

When Verot arrived, Bauderet met him at the wharf with every outward show of irrepressible delight; but the young Parisian at once felt that some great change had taken place in his friend. At first he was inclined to fear that Bauderet was not sincere in his expressions of joy over his arrival; but soon enough the mystery was adequately explained. Bauderet was in love. His whole nature was absorbed in the new passion.

Mademoiselle Des Champs was the daughter of a retired painter, whose home was but a few steps from Bauderet's gate. Recently the poet had met her. To meet her was to love her, and now he could find room for no other thoughts. Isobel Des Champs was the subject of his most eloquent conversation, his strangely melodious poetry, his curiously brilliant sketches in water-colours.

Bauderet was anxious to have Verot see Isobel Des Champs; and, of course, the young visitor, especially after Bauderet's eloquent descriptions, felt quite willing to meet the beautiful girl. Nor was he in the least disappointed when he saw her; indeed, her loveliness so far surpassed expectation, so dwarfed all former vision of maidenly attractiveness, that Verot was struck to the heart by her first glance.

If Isobel captivated Verot, it was not a loss of love at first sight, for the handsome Parisian did not fail to impress her imagination in turn. From the moment of their first meeting they were ardent lovers, as everybody could plainly see, save only Bauderet. So lost in the infatuation of absolute devotion was he that he could see nothing but Isobel's dazzling beauty, could hear nothing but the rich, low music of her Creole voice.

Soon enough Verot was in the seventh heaven of a successful courtship—not courtship, but love-telling and love-listening while poor Bauderet went on in blissful enjoyment of his imaginary lordship of Isobel's heart.

The time was approaching for Verot to depart for France, when, one morning, he informed Bauderet that he and Isobel were to be married, and would set sail within a fortnight to make Paris their home.

At first Bauderet was stupefied by the announcement. He gazed almost vacantly into his friend's eyes, while his face grew deadly white. Not a feature moved, however, nor did the quiet smile go from his thin, firm lips.

It was an admirable sight exhibition of that self-control

which in those days was so much cultivated by gentlemen who were in the habit of settling all matters of personal disagreement at the point of sword or muzzle of pistol.

Of course Verot had counted the cost, and fully expected a duel; but he was pleasantly surprised to find that Bauderet would not demand a meeting. Furthermore, instead of appealing to the code, the host who had been so cruelly robbed took the turn of affairs with a philosophic resignation truly admirable. After the first great struggle against the terrible disappointment which the disaster to his hopes had brought, he drew close his friend and wished him great joy.

Verot was both touched and awed by the strange change that came over Bauderet's face and manner. It was a slow, mysterious transformation of the man. His face took on an inscrutable mask of quiet, almost serene resignation, behind which something suggested immeasurable depths of acute suffering. In his eyes at times burnt a light which startled Verot and haunted his dreams at night. About this time Bauderet went frequently to see an old negress, a voodoo charm-weaver, and procured from her a phial of hideous poison—a black liquid, thick, rank, frenzy-bearing, made from the heads of snakes, the tails of scorpions, and the roots of various deadly weeds, all steeped together for many days. Among the African voodoo workers, this liquid was known by an appellation which meant "brain-burner," it was said to induce madness of the most hopeless kind. Its concoction was attended with the most solemnly horrible of rites and incantations.

It was the night before Isobel and Verot's wedding-day. Bauderet appeared to be in better spirits than usual; he had some rare old wine brought into the library, and he and Verot sat up till late drinking and smoking, while they permitted themselves perfect freedom in conversation.

Although, as I have said, their tastes were similar, no two men could have been less alike in personal appearance than were Verot and Bauderet. The Parisian was tall, athletic, fair, with blue eyes and yellow curling hair, while the Creole was dark, slight, black-eyed, mysterious-looking, possessing the singular magnetism of a face at once handsome and inscrutable. Bauderet's slightness was not physical weakness, however, for he was a noted swordsman, possessed of extraordinary nervous energy.

It was late in the night, and the lamps were burning low, when Bauderet arose, and said:

"Well, my dear old fellow, it is growing late, and you must not be drowsy on your wedding morn. One more cigar—just one of the best that Cuba ever gave to the lips of man, and then to your dreams."

He fetched from a little hanging cabinet a small ivory box curiously carved and moulded in gold, out of which he took two large *oscuros* separately wrapped in silver foil. One of these he handed to Verot, at the same time lighting the other.

"The last two of a priceless lot sent me two years ago by a friend at Havana," he said.

Verot daintily held the almost black cigar under his nostrils to inhale its fragrance, and instantly recoiled, for there came from it a strange, insinuating and unbearable stench.

"That is nothing," laughed Bauderet, with a hollow, brutal ring in his voice that startled Verot. "When you light it, the smell disappears, and the smoke is exquisitely fine. See!" and he puffed a light cloud towards his friend's nostrils. "Isn't that incomparable bouquet?"

Verot put the cigar between his teeth, and tried to light it, but the thrill of atrocious evil that flashed through his nerves caused him to let it fall.

"It's horrible!" he exclaimed. "I can't bear it!"

"Oh, what womanish qualms!" remarked Bauderet, almost testily, picking up the fallen *oscuro* and handing it to his guest, "smoke it; this may be our last night together, and—and—"

Something in Bauderet's voice appealed to Verot's sympathy while at the same time it made his heart almost sink. A man lying in his coffin, ready to be buried alive, might have had such a strain in his voice. His face was white, with that ghastliness which comes in extreme moments to a dark countenance, and his eyes, strangely dilated, burned with a dusky, deep-set brilliance.

"You know how I feel, Verot—you know how I feel."

Again the Parisian essayed to light the cigar; but the thing was not possible. He flung it aside, after inhaling one intolerable draught of its smoke!

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Bauderet. "You have less courage than I supposed; but, then, you Parisians, as I have often told you, are a degenerate set."

Verot had risen, and now stood towering above his host, his magnificent frame expanding, and a determined look in his fine, fair face.

"That cigar was poisoned!" he exclaimed, with dramatic energy of expression.

"Oh, surely not!" said Bauderet, with immediate concern, stooping and picking it up. He put it to his nose.

"Why that is strange!" he cried. "What can it mean?"

The two men looked steadily, searchingly into each other's eyes; and slowly but clearly read the whole situation. One was aware that his deadly purpose had been discovered; the other knew that death was lurking for him in every corner of that gloomy old house. Verot was the first to speak.

"How shall we settle this?" he demanded, in a hard, dry tone.

Bauderet laughed sardonically and puffed lazily at his cigar, meantime shrugging his shoulders as if the matter were of light consequence to him.

"I think the best way to settle it is to go to bed and sleep it off," he remarked with a half yawn.

"Scoundrel, villain, murderer!" exclaimed Verot, permitting for the moment his indignation to master him. "You shall answer to me now!"

"Oh, certainly, if you wish," said Bauderet calmly. "my sword-room is but a step from here, follow me if you're not afraid."

Verot followed, but not without a strange sense of insecurity. It was as if some treachery were about to be sprung upon him at every step while they passed through two or three dim rooms and along a low, narrow passage between damp brick walls, then into a bare, windowless little room.

"Look here," said Bauderet, stopping close to one of the dismal walls, "this doesn't look like a door, does it?"

He fumbled a moment about a certain spot, pressed a hidden spring, and pushed open a low shutter, disclosing another cell-like apartment, dank, grimy and ill-smelling. Into this Verot followed him. They

halted, and faced each other, a little lamp carried by Bauderet lighting up their drawn and ghastly faces.

"We can settle our little trouble here without the slightest fear of being interrupted. This is where, as I have heard, one of my reckless kinsmen, who formerly owned the house, used to confine stolen slaves during the time he was awaiting a chance to run them off. Nobody living, save myself, knows this room exists."

He smiled cynically, and lifted the lamp, gazing around at the slime on the reeking walls. Then he made a little petulant motion, and said:

"The swords—the rapiers—I have forgotten them. Hold this lamp a moment, please!"

Verot mechanically accepted the proffered light; but as he did so something in Bauderet's look, or in his movement, put him on his guard, or rather startled him.

"You'll not be afraid to stand here a moment, while I go to fetch the swords, will you?"

He placed peculiar accent on the word "*afraid*," and Verot felt his blood tingle in response to the insinuation.

"You shall soon have your test of skill as well as of courage," he responded; "but if you are going back after weapons, you'd better take the lamp. I can wait without it."

"This is not a pleasant waiting-room," sneered Bauderet, again letting his eyes slowly sweep the loathsome little cell. He was still smoking the smouldering black cigar, and the pale rings of fragrance slowly strayed in the chill damp air.

"Don't stand there like that," said Verot savagely, "or I'll stamp you into the floor."

"A coward would do that," retorted Bauderet, taking two or three light, backward steps and pausing in the little doorway. "I have some doubts of your honour, or ought to have."

"Fetch the rapiers, sir," was all that Verot said. His terrible anger was m-tering him.

Bauderet retreated one more step, then, with a fiendish leer, laid his hand on the heavy shutter.

"You command, but I shall take my own time to obey," he remarked, in a tone of constrained excitement. "How should you like to wait in this little *boudoir* until your bride came to you?"

Like a flash the meaning of the purpose of Bauderet's words and movements leapt through Verot's mind. Already the door was slowly swinging shut. So frightful was the thought, with its infinite suggestions of horror, that the tall Parisian stood for a moment paralysed.

"Good-night, for ever, Augustin Verot. May your dreams be sweet," said Bauderet.

Slowly, steadily, the door, which was in reality a hinged section of the massive wall, swung round.

Verot let fall the lamp, which, clanging brazenly on the brick floor, remained sputtering and burning there with a strange, fantastic light.

One long bound the Parisian made, uttering a low, harsh cry of rage and terror as he was caught between the closing door and the jaw of the doorway.

There was a struggle like the fighting of wild beasts, the men growling and panting in the extremity of their brutal straining and tearing.

Presently a body was heaved and flung; it fell in the centre of the cell, and lay ghastly and motionless beside the fast dying lamp flame. Then the ponderous door went to with a dull thump and a click of the hidden spring.

One of the rivals stood on the outside of the cell panting and quivering, the white froth clotted on his lips; the other lay limp and lifeless within.

HARRY ROGERS.



THE year 1759 is a golden one in British history. A great French army, that threatened Hanover, was overthrown at Minden, chiefly by the heroic stupidity of six British regiments, who, mistaking their orders, charged the entire French cavalry in line, and destroyed them.

"I have seen," said the astonished French general, "what I never thought to be possible—a single line of infantry break through three lines of cavalry, ranked in order of battle, and tumble them into ruin." Contades omitted to add that this astonishing infantry, charging cavalry in open formation, was scourged during their entire advance by powerful batteries on their flank.

At Quiberon, in the same year, Hawke, amid a tempest, destroyed a mighty fleet that threatened England with invasion; and on the heights of Abraham Wolfe broke the French power in America.

"We are forced," said Horace Walpole, the wit of his day, "to ask every morning what new victory there is, for fear of missing one." Yet, of all the great deeds of that memorable year, the victory which overthrew Montcalm, and gave Quebec to England—a victory achieved by the genius of Pitt and the daring of Wolfe—was, if not the most shining in quality, the most far-reaching in its results. "With the triumph of Wolfe on the heights of Abraham," says Green, "began the history of the United States."

The hero of that historic fight wore a singularly unheroic aspect. Wolfe's face, in the famous picture by West, resembles that of a nervous and sentimental boy—he was an adjutant at sixteen, and only thirty-three when he fell, mortally wounded, under the walls of Quebec.

His forehead and chin receded, his nose, tip-tilted heavenwards, formed with his other features the point of an obtuse triangle. His hair was fiery red, his shoulders narrow, his legs a pair of attenuated spindle-shanks; he was a chronic invalid. But between his fiery poll and his plebeian and upturned nose flashed a pair of eyes—keen, piercing, and steady—worthy of Cæsar or of Napoleon. In warlike genius he was on land as Nelson was at sea, chivalrous, fiery, intense. A "magnetic" man, with a strange gift of impressing himself on the imagination of his soldiers, and of so penetrating the whole force he commanded with his own spirit that, in his hands, it became a terrible and almost resistless instrument of war.

The gift for choosing fit agents is one of the highest qualities of genius, and it is a sign of Pitt's piercing insight into character that, for the great task of overthrowing the French power in Canada, he chose

what seemed to commonplace vision, a rickety, hypochondriacal, and very youthful colonel like Wolfe.

Pitt's strategy for the American campaign was specious, not to say grandiose. A line of strong French posts, ranging from Duquesne, on the Ohio, to Ticonderoga, on Lake Chaplain, held the English settlements on the coast girdled, as in an iron band, from all extension westward. While Quebec, perched in almost impregnable strength on the frowning cliffs which look down on the St. Lawrence, was the centre of the French power in Canada.

Pitt's plan was that Amherst, with 12,000 men, should capture Ticonderoga. Prideaux, with another powerful force, should carry Montreal, and Wolfe, with 7,000 men, should invest Quebec, where Amherst and Prideaux were to join him.

Two-thirds of this great plan broke down. Amherst and Prideaux, indeed, succeeded in their local operations, but neither was able to join Wolfe, who had to carry out with one army the task for which three were designed.

On June 21st the advanced squadron of the fleet, conveying Wolfe, came working up the St. Lawrence. To deceive the enemy they flew the white flag, and, as the eight great ships came abreast of the island of Orleans, the good people of Quebec persuaded themselves it was a French fleet bringing supplies and reinforcements. The bells rang a welcome. Flags waved. Boats put eagerly off to greet the approaching ships. But as these swung round at their anchorage the white flag of France disappeared, and the red ensign of Great Britain flew in its place.

The crowds, struck suddenly dumb, watched the gleam of the hostile flag with chapfallen faces. A priest who was staring at the ships through a telescope actually dropped dead with the excitement and passion created by the sight of the British fleet.

On June 26th the main body of the fleet, bringing Wolfe himself and 7,000 troops, was in sight of the lofty cliffs on which Quebec stands, Cook, afterwards the famous navigator, master of the *Mercury*, sounding ahead of the fleet. Wolfe at once seized the Isle of Orleans, which shelters the basin of Quebec to the east and divides the St. Lawrence into two branches, and, with a few officers, quickly stood on the western point of the isle. At a glance the desperate nature of the task committed to him was apparent.

Quebec stands on the rocky nose of a promontory, shaped roughly like a bull's head, looking eastward. The St. Lawrence flows eastward under the chin of the

head; the St. Charles runs, so to speak, down its nose from the north to meet the St. Lawrence.

The city itself stands on lofty cliffs, and, as Wolfe looked upon it on that June evening far away, it was girt and crowned with batteries.

The banks of the St. Lawrence, that define which we may call the throat of the bull, are precipitous and lofty, and seem by mere natural strength to defy attack; though it was just here, by an ant-like track up 250 feet of almost perpendicular cliff, Wolfe actually climbed to the plains of Abraham. To the east of Quebec is a curve of lofty shore, seven miles long, between the St. Charles and the Montmorenci.

When Wolfe's eye followed these seven miles of curving shore he saw the tents of a French army double his own in strength, and commanded by the most brilliant French soldier of his generation, Montcalm. Quebec, in a word, was a great natural fortress, attacked by 9,000 troops, and defended by 16,000, and if a daring military genius urged the British attack, a soldier as daring and well-nigh as able as Wolfe directed the French defence.

Montcalm gave a proof of his fine quality as a soldier within twenty-four hours of the appearance of the British fleet. The very afternoon the British ships dropped anchor a terrific tempest swept over the harbour, drove the transports from their moorings, dashed the great ships of war against each other, and wrought immense mischief.

The tempest dropped as quickly as it had risen. The night fell black and moonless. Towards midnight the British sentinels on the point of the Isle of Orleans saw, drifting silently through the gloom, the outlines of a cluster of ships. They were eight huge fire-ships, floating mines packed with explosives.

The nerve of the French sailors, fortunately for the British, failed them, and they fired the ships too soon. But the spectacle of these flaming monsters as they drifted towards the British fleet was appalling. The river showed ebony-black under the white flames; the glare lit up the river cliffs, the roofs of the city, the tents of Montcalm, the slopes of the distant hills, the black hulls of the British ships. It was one of the most stupendous exhibitions of fireworks ever witnessed.

But it was almost as harmless as a display of fireworks. The boats from the British fleet were by this time in the water, and pulling with steady daring to meet these drifting volcanoes. They were grappled, towed to the banks, and stranded, and there they spluttered and smoked and flamed till the white light of the dawn broke over them.

The only mischief achieved by these fire-ships was to burn alive one of their own captains and five or six of his men, who failed to escape in their boats.

Wolfe, in addition to the Isle of Orleans, seized Point Levi, opposite the city, and this gave him complete command of the basin of Quebec. From his batteries on Point Levi, too, he could fire directly on the city, and destroy it if he could not capture it.

He himself landed the main body of his troops on the east bank of the Montmorenci, Montcalm's position, strongly entrenched, being between him and the city. Between the two armies, however, ran the deep gorge through which the swift current of the Montmorenci rushes down to join the St. Lawrence. The gorge is barely a gunshot in width, but of stupendous depth. The Montmorenci tumbles over its rocky bed with a speed that turns the flashing waters almost to the whiteness of snow.

Was there ever a more curious military position

adopted by a great general in the face of superior forces?

Wolfe's tiny army was distributed into three camps. His right wing on the Montmorenci was six miles distant from his left wing at Point Levi, and between the centre, on the Isle of Orleans, and the two wings ran the two branches of St. Lawrence. That Wolfe deliberately made such a distribution of his forces under the very eyes of Montcalm showed his amazing daring. And yet beyond firing across the Montmorenci on Montcalm's left wing and bombarding the city from Point Levi, the British general could accomplish nothing. Montcalm knew that winter must compel Wolfe to retreat, and he remained stubbornly, but warily, on the defensive.

On July 18th, the British performed a daring feat. In the darkness of the night, two of the men-of-war and several sloops ran past the Quebec batteries and reached the river above the town. They destroyed some fire-ships they found there, and cut off Montcalm's communication by water with Montreal. This rendered it necessary for the French to establish guards on the line of precipices between Quebec and Cap-Rouge.

On July 28th, the French repeated the experiment of fire-ships on a still more gigantic scale. A vast fire-raft was constructed, composed of some seventy schooners, boats, and rafts, chained together, and loaded with combustibles and explosives. The fire-raft is described as being one hundred fathoms in length, and its appearance as it came drifting on the current, a mass of roaring fire, discharging every instant a shower of missiles, was terrifying.

But the British sailors dashed down upon it, broke the huge craft into fragments, and towed them easily ashore. "Hang it, Jack," one sailor was heard to say to his mate, as he tugged at the oar, "didst thee ever take hell in tow before?"

Time was on Montcalm's side, and unless Wolfe could draw him from his impregnable entrenchments, and compel him to fight, the game was lost.

When the tide fell a stretch of shoal a few score yards wide was left bare on the French side of the Montmorenci. The slope that covered this was steep, slippery with grass, crowned by a great battery, and swept by the cross-fire of entrenchments on either flank. Montcalm, too, holding the interior lines, could bring to the defence of this point twice the force with which Wolfe could attack it. Yet to Wolfe's keen eyes this seemed the one vulnerable point in Montcalm's front, and on July 31st he made a desperate leap upon it.

The attack was planned with great art. The British batteries thundered across Montmorenci, and a feint was made of fording that river higher up, so as to distract the attention of the French, while the boats of the fleet threatened a landing near Quebec itself. At half-past five the tide was at its lowest, and the boat-flotilla, swinging round at a signal, pulled at speed for the patch of muddy foreshore already selected.

The Grenadiers and Royal Americans leapt ashore in the mud, and—waiting neither for orders nor leaders nor supports—dashed up the hill to storm the redoubt. They reached the first redoubt, tumbled over it and through it, only to find themselves breathless in a semicircle of fire. The men fell fast, but yet struggled fiercely upwards. A furious storm of rain broke over the combatants at that moment, and made the steep grass-covered slope as slippery as mere glass. "We could not see half way down the hill," writes the French officer in command of the battery on the summit. But through the smoke and driving rain they could still see



The British army, in line of battle, stood looking down on Quebec.

the Grenadiers and Royal Americans in ragged clusters, scarce able to stand, yet striving desperately to climb upwards.

The reckless ardour of the Grenadiers had spoilt Wolfe's attack, the sudden storm helped to save the French, and Wolfe withdrew his broken but furious battalions, having lost some 500 of his best men and officers.

The exultant French regarded the siege as practically over, but Wolfe was a man of heroic and quenchless tenacity, and never so dangerous as when he seemed to be in the last straits. He held doggedly on, in spite of cold, and tempest, and disease. His own frail body broke down, and for the first time the shadow of depression fell on the British camps, when they no longer saw the red head and lean and scraggy body of their General moving amongst them.

For a week, between August 22nd and 29th, he lay apparently a dying man, his face, with its curious angles, white with pain and haggard with disease. But he struggled out again, and framed yet new plans of attack.

On September 10th, the captains of the men-of-war held a council on board the flagship, and resolved that the approach of winter required the fleet to leave Quebec without delay. By this time, too, Wolfe's scanty force was diminished one-seventh by disease or losses in battle.

Wolfe, however, had now formed the plan which ultimately gave him success, though at the cost of his own life.

From a tiny little cove, now known as Wolfe's Cove, five miles to the west of Quebec, a path, scarcely accessible to a goat, climbs up the face of the great cliff, nearly 250ft. high. The place was so inaccessible that only a post of 100 men kept guard over it.

Up that track, in the blackness of the night, Wolfe resolved to lead his army to the attack of Quebec.

It needed the most exquisite combinations to bring the attacking force to that point from three separate quarters, in the gloom of night, at a given moment, and without a sound that could alarm the enemy.

Wolfe withdrew his force from the Montmorenci, embarked them on board his ships, and made every sign of departure. Montcalm mistrusted these signs, and suspected Wolfe would make at least one more leap on Quebec before withdrawing. Yet he did not in the least suspect Wolfe's real designs. He discussed, in fact, the very plan Wolfe adopted, but dismissed it by saying: "We need not suppose that the enemy have wings!"

The British ships were kept moving up and down the river front for several days so as to distract and perplex the enemy.

On October 12th Wolfe's plans were complete, and he issued his final orders. One sentence in them curiously anticipates Nelson's famous signal at Trafalgar. "Officers and men," wrote Wolfe, "will remember what their country expects of them."

A feint on Beauport, five miles to the east of Quebec, as evening fell, made Montcalm mass his troops there; but it was at a point five miles west of Quebec the real attack was directed.

At two o'clock at night two lanterns appeared for a minute in the maintop shrouds of the *Sunderland*. It was the signal, and from the fleet, from the Isle of Orleans, and from Point Levi, the English boats stole silently out, freighted with some 1,700 troops, and converged towards the point in the black wall of cliffs agreed upon. Wolfe himself was in the leading boat.

As the boat drifted silently through the darkness on that desperate adventure Wolfe, to the officers about him, commenced to recite Gray's "Elegy":

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour,
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

"Now, gentlemen," he added, "I would rather have written that poem than take Quebec." Wolfe, in fact, was half poet, half soldier.

Suddenly from the great wall of rock and forest to their left broke the challenge of a French sentinel: "*Qui vive!*" A Highland officer of Fraser's regiment, who spoke French fluently, answered the challenge:

"*La France.*"

"*A quel régiment?*"

"*De la Reine.*" answered the Highlander.

As it happened, the French expected a flotilla of provision boats, and after a little further dialogue, in which the cool Highlander completely deceived the French sentries, and the British were allowed to slip past.

The tiny cove was safely reached, the boats stole silently up without a blunder, twenty-four volunteers from the Light Infantry leapt from their boat and led the way in single file up the path, that ran like a thread along the face of the cliff. Wolfe sat eagerly listening in his boat below. Suddenly from the summit he saw the flash of the muskets, and heard the stern shout which told him his men were up.

A clear, firm order, and the troops sitting silent in the boats leapt ashore, and the long file of soldiers, like a chain of ants, went up the face of the cliff, Wolfe amongst the foremost, and formed in order on the plateau, the boats meanwhile rowing back at speed to bring up the remainder of the troops.

Wolfe was at last within Montcalm's guard!

When the morning of the 13th dawned, the British army, in line of battle, stood looking down on Quebec. Montcalm quickly heard the news, and came riding furiously across the St. Charles to the scene of danger.

He rode, as those who saw him tell, with a fixed look, and uttering not a word. The vigilance of months was rendered worthless by the amazing night escapade. When he reached the slopes, Montcalm saw before him the silent red wall of British Infantry, the Highlanders with waving tartans and wind-blown plumes all in battle array. It was not a detachment, but an army!

The fight lasted fifteen minutes, and might be told in almost as many words. Montcalm brought on his men in three powerful columns, in number double that of Wolfe's force. The British troops stood grimly silent, though they were tormented by the fire of the Indians and Canadians lying in the grass.

The French advanced eagerly, with a tumult of shouts and a confused fire; the British moved forward a few rods, dressed their lines, and when the French were within forty paces threw in one fierce volley. Again, again, and yet again, the flame ran from end to end of the steadfast line!

When the smoke lifted the French column were wrecked. The British instantly charged. The spirit of the clan awoke in Fraser's Highlanders! They flung

aside their muskets, drew their broadswords, and with a fierce Celtic slogan rushed on the enemy. Never was a charge pressed home more ruthlessly!

After the fight one of the British officers wrote: "There was not a bayonet in the three leading British regiments, nor a broadsword amongst the Highlanders, that was not crimson with the blood of a foeman."

Wolfe himself charged at the head of the Grenadiers, his bright uniform making him conspicuous. He was shot in the wrist, wrapped a handkerchief round the wound, and still ran forward. Two other bullets struck him—one it is said fired by a British deserter, a sergeant reduced by Wolfe for brutality to the rank of a private.

"Don't let the men see me drop," said Wolfe as he fell, to an officer running beside him. An officer of the Grenadiers, a gentleman volunteer, and a private, carried Wolfe to a redoubt near. He refused to allow a surgeon to be called. "There is no need," he said, "it is all over with me."

Then one of the little group, casting a look at the smoke-covered battlefield, cried:

"They run! See how they run!"

"Who run?" said the dying Wolfe, like a man roused from sleep.

"The enemy, sir," was the answer.

A flash of life came back to Wolfe; the eager spirit thrust from it the swoon of death; he gave a clear, emphatic order for cutting off the enemy's retreat; then, turning on his side, he added:

"Now, God be praised; I die in peace."

That fight determined that the North American continent should be the heritage of the Anglo-Saxon race.

"When we first heard of Wolfe's glorious deed," writes Thackeray in "*The Virginians*," "of that army marshalled in darkness, and carried silently up the midnight river—of those rocks scaled by the intrepid leader and his troops—of the defeat of Montcalm on the open plain by the sheer valour of his conqueror, we were all intoxicated in England by the news."

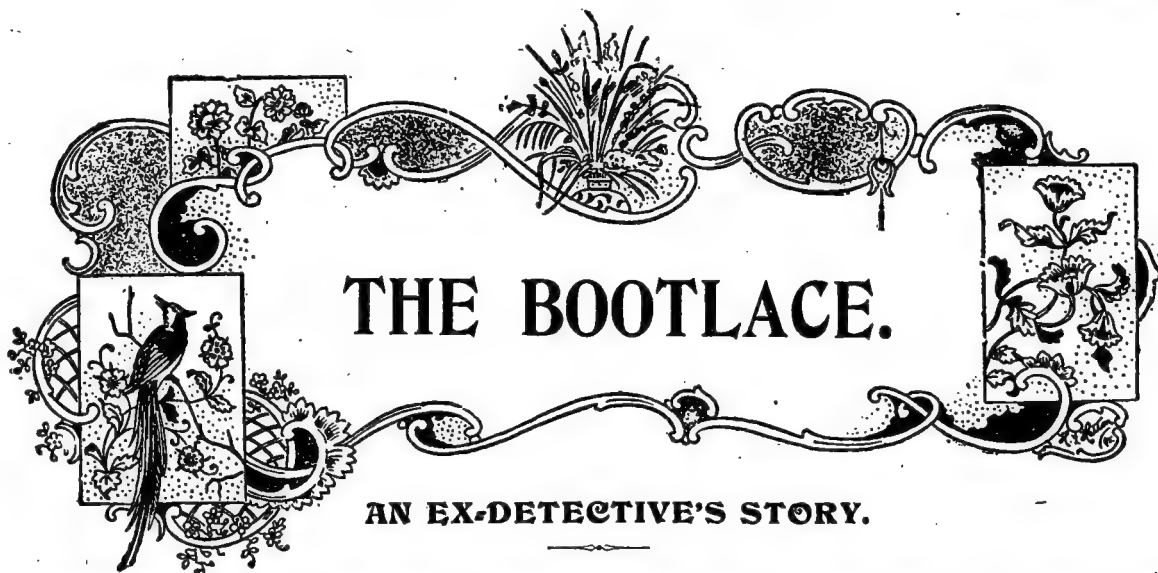
Not merely all London, but half England flamed into illuminations. One spot alone was dark—Blackheath, where, solitary amidst a rejoicing nation, Wolfe's mother mourned for her heroic son, like Milton's "Lycidas," "dead ere his prime."

RESULT OF PICTURE COMPETITION.—No. 2.

£5 HAS gone to Mr. W. Shipway, 32, Howard Street, Reading; and the remaining £5 has been divided among the following five competitors: Mrs. Pullin, 215A, Hornsey Road, Holloway; T. W. Randle, 33, Malvern Road, Hornsey Park; W. Spencer, 8, Bettridge Road, Hurlingham; A. G. Shrivelle, Thomsons, Golden Green, Tonbridge; and Miss Maud Power, 15, The Avenue, Castle Hill, Ealing. The following is the winning attempt:

"LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP."

Two travellers bold, whose destination
Lay far above all habitation,
Meet unexpected oppugnation
From "Leo," lord of brute creation.
Leo feels mad with indignation
(Such fearlessness needs reprobation),
Springs forth in joyful expectation
Of feasting without limitation.
Leaping in unpremeditation,
He finds, much to his consternation,
That anger, race, and disputation
Are sometimes met by condemnation.
Having attained their elevation
By pluck and cool determination,
They now descend by slow gradation,
Bearing their spoil with exultation.



THE BOOTLACE.

AN EX-DETECTIVE'S STORY.

"I SUPPOSE you have had a great many interesting experiences?" I remarked to an ex-detective, now a great friend of mine.

"Yes," he replied, "I must say that I have solved a few mysterious cases in my time. There was one in particular which puzzled me tremendously, and was so clever a dodge as to seem almost incredible. It was at a little country village. There had been a murder with extensive robbery. I was wired for, and hastened to attend with all promptitude. I was cordially welcomed by the local inspector, who informed me that they had arrested a man on suspicion, and that the evidence was black against him. He then related all the particulars of the case to me, which were as follows:

"The murdered man was a very eccentric character, aged about fifty. With the exception of an extremely old man who waited on him, he lived alone, being a confirmed woman-hater.

"The old man," I asked, "have you arrested him?"

"The inspector shrugged his shoulders. 'He is eighty years of age; it is not possible for him to kill a man in his prime; besides, there are signs of a severe struggle. No, we have not arrested him.'

"How long has he been in the murdered man's service?"

"About a year and a half."

"Thank you," I jotted that down. "Pray continue." He did so.

"We know nothing more about him except that he was reputed wonderfully rich. On the morning his old servant, as was his custom, took his master some hot water. He knocked twice, but finding there was no response, opened the door, intending to stand the jug inside. An awful sight met his eyes. On the floor lay his master, stone dead, while everywhere were signs of a severe and protracted struggle. Chairs, tables, boxes, everything was topsy-turvy.

"One moment," I broke in. "Does it not seem strange to you that the old man should have slept through it all?"

"Not at all. He is as deaf as a post; besides, their rooms are far apart. But to continue: The old man communicated with us, and I wired to you. I carefully searched the house and grounds. In the library there was

a rather superior-looking man of the mechanic class. He was lying unconscious. On the table stood a decanter of wine. "Hallo, my man," thought I, "what does this mean?" We raised him up and examined him. On the back of his head was a terrible bruise, most likely where he had fallen. He showed no signs of returning consciousness, and I sent for the old man. I told him how matters stood, and the old chap shouted out: "He's been at the wine; master always keeps a decanter of drugged wine on the table." There was nothing to be got out of him yet, though, so I went and examined the garden. I found footprints leading to a window which had been forced, and closely examined them. Then I went back and measured the arrested man's boots; they corresponded exactly with the footprints. That's my case; what do you think of it?"

"Well," I admitted, "it seems very strong against the suspected man. Still, I cannot understand him drinking wine after committing murder."

"Well, you see," said the inspector, "one glass is enough to drug a man for hours."

"I see," I replied, "that alters the case. By-the-by, does he plead innocent or guilty?"

"Innocent. He has some faked story about receiving a blow on the head and remembering nothing more."

"Ah," I said, "you never know in such a case as this what's true or not true; however, we shall see. I should like to have an interview with the arrested man."

"Fortunately I was allowed to go and examine him, and form my own opinion. I found him an ordinary type of the better class British workman. Somehow the moment I set eyes on him I felt sure he was innocent. I explained who I was to him, and that if he was innocent it would be my endeavour to prove it. He swore that he had no knowledge of the crime, nor of how he entered the room."

"Well," I said, "you must tell me everything you know. I shall possibly be able to arrive at some conclusion."

"I know but very little, sir. I was walking along the road in front of the house, when, without a second's warning, I received a severe blow on the head. I remember nothing more."

"Were you quite sober?" I asked.

"Yes, sir; I had only one pint of beer."

"What seems strange to me," I said, "is the fact of your footprints right across the garden."

"My footprints, sir? What do you mean?"

"I told him that he had been traced over the garden, and he looked rather perplexed; then he looked down at his boots, and blurted out:

"Sir, someone has taken my boots off and put them on differently."

"How?" I said.

"I tied them in a bow—now they are in a hurried knot. See." And he held them up for my inspection.

"He was quite right; they were tied in a knot, as he said.

"Are you sure you tied them differently?" I enquired.

"Positive. I could swear it in a law court."

"I put that down in my note-book; it was one point in his favour. Another thing that impressed me was where he could have put the stolen property if he had fallen suddenly after partaking of the drugged wine? The spoil ought to have been in that room. It was not, for I had examined the apartment.

"All this time the man had been silently engaged in thinking, now he said:

"Look here, sir. In front of the house the grass is rather long. I was walking on it at the time, and when I received the blow I was right in front of the gate. You examine that grass and see if there are any signs of a fall on the grass, or if anyone has been dragged along it, for I feel sure that I was carried from that spot into the house."

"I will go and examine it," I said, much struck by his intelligence; "and now good-bye for the present, and don't get downhearted."

"Good-bye, sir! God bless you!" he cried, and then I left him and went towards the house.

"On the way I met the Inspector, who enquired if I had learnt anything.

"Yes," I replied, "a good deal. I think I can almost prove the arrested man's innocence."

"He looked rather disappointed, but did not ask for any particulars. I believe he thought I was mad. I reached the front of the house, and carefully searched the grass. Soon I found a place where it looked disarranged, and, getting out my lens, I carefully examined it. Yes, there was the mark of the fallen man. A little farther back was the mark of another man, who had evidently stood there some time. But, search as I would, there were no signs of anyone being dragged along. But stay; I suddenly alighted on a deep footprint, then another, and another right up to the gate, then across the garden, till they ended close by the forced window. Suddenly an idea struck me; the footprints seemed very deep. I made one or two beside them; mine were not nearly so deep. What did this point to? The maker of them had been heavily laden. There could be no doubt of it, the villain had taken off his own shoes and put on those of the arrested man; then he had carried him across the garden and thrown him through the window unconscious, pouring a glass of the drugged wine down his throat; then he had robbed the dead man and departed.

"First: How did he know the wine was drugged?"

"Second: How was it there was no signs of his departure?"

"Third: How could he carry the valuables away? For I had been informed they were very heavy. In my

own mind I had proved one man's innocence; but a harder task lay before me—to prove another's guilt.

"Search as I might, I could find no more traces, and the matter became all the more puzzling. The burglar seemed either to have flown away or to be still in the house. This feeling was augmented later on, when I went to the nearest station and enquired if any strangers had been about. To my surprise, they positively affirmed that I was the only stranger that had come or gone for the last few days. The next station was some ten miles off; it was not likely they would have carried their spoil that distance. When I reached my lodging and thought the matter over, there was only one possible conclusion: The murderer must be still in the village, and some of the stolen property must be still hidden in the house or grounds, and in the evening I determined to watch the house, for there I was convinced lay the key to the mystery.

"About ten o'clock I cautiously crept into the garden and scaled a tree which stood in a direct line with the old man's bedroom. I have been in a few strange positions, but never in such a one as that, before or since. For there I sat, perched in that tree for two mortal hours, in the most uncomfortable of positions, and nothing occurred.

"Presently I saw the light in one of the bottom rooms go out, and soon after the old man himself came up to bed. First he very carefully drew his window curtains together, which shut me out from all view. But I meant to see somehow, and noticing that the ends were left uncovered, I cautiously descended from my perch, and after taking off my boots, began to climb up the creeper which covered the house, and was as thick as a man's wrist in some places.

"My heart beat violently as I neared his window. The stem of the creeper was getting thinner, and one false step might ruin all; but I reached it at last, and by bending under the window had a fine view. The first thing that surprised me was that he had not begun to undress; but a greater was in store, for, after walking across the room and locking the door, he touched a board in the wall—which was of panelled oak—and it came open, revealing a small secret chamber. It might have been Aladdin's cave, for it glittered and shone, even in that pale light. It contained the stolen property!

"What happened during the next few minutes I cannot tell; my brain was too dazed to observe. All I knew was that the old man had the stolen property. When next I looked, he was packing the things into parcels, wrapped in rags and old paper, so that they looked like rubbish. As I watched him I observed that he no longer painfully hobbled about, but rather flew over the floor in his joy. Soon they were all wrapped up, and the secret panel was slid noiselessly into its place. I watched with great interest for the next development, but I am bound to admit that it almost staggered me. The old man fumbled about his beard for some time, when it suddenly fell off, revealing the face of a man about forty; then the wig followed suit, and the metamorphosis was complete. It was a young man in disguise. The mystery was solved. Soon after he extinguished his candle, and I went to my lodgings to ponder over the strange case.

"In the morning we arrested him, to his great surprise; but after having his beard and wig removed, he was too astounded to lie, and confessed his guilt. Needless to say, the suspected man was released at once."

S. P. T.



AT that time I was engaged (and very pleased to be) to a most enigmatical young person. She spoke rarely and in a way always a little mysteriously, making voluntarily secrets of a hundred little actions of life, and loving solitude in an alarming manner.

All this was off-set by eyes so beautiful, by a colouring so marvellous, by an expression so divine, that I had not the courage to reflect on the singularity of her character. I loved her, and I often passed hours of the night sitting before her doorstep, simply dreaming "that she lived here," and meditating on her Presence as does the believer on the Transubstantiation.

I did not know, in the first place, whether she loved me or not; she always refused to answer that question, referring to the wishes of her parents and her confidence in their wisdom. If I insisted, she generally ended by saying "that she knew nothing about it, but that she felt no antipathy towards me, and that, according to her ideas, was enough to decide a young girl on marriage!" In vain I supplicated, in vain I tried to animate this enigmatical being; she remained as distant as the manner in which she loved, as unknown as she was dominating.

One evening as I was dreaming a little sadly of these things, alone on the Terrace of the Syrtes, a commotion was heard in the house. I returned to the salon, where everything was in disorder, my hosts were distressed, their friends embarrassed and troubled, and old Madame Desparcs horribly pale and trembling.

"What in the world has happened?" I asked. They explained incoherently that Madame Desparcs' diamonds were stolen—old family diamonds of great value. All the servants had been summoned into an adjoining room, in short a formal search was to be instituted. An old gentleman, Monsieur de la Hestre, had been unanimously selected to direct this investigation, just as I was entering, and his first proposition was that everyone submit, or rather offer himself to be searched. Although the thing was rather offensive, no one protested, and it was decided that, after the servants, each one present should be examined.

To tell the truth, all this seemed of small importance beside my personal cares; and, with several others, I awaited the end of the adventure, while M. de la Hestre, his two witnesses and our host, began the inspection of the domestics.

Very soon I fell again into my meditation, my eyes fixed on the fireplace as though there were a fire, when suddenly I felt a slight touch on my

elbow. I raised my head with a start to see my *fiancée* looking at me, most beseechingly. We were alone near the fireside and could talk in low tones without being overheard. She murmured very low:

"If you love me, arrange that they search you first—then try to be near me and, without being seen, try to conceal the object that I shall pass you from behind."

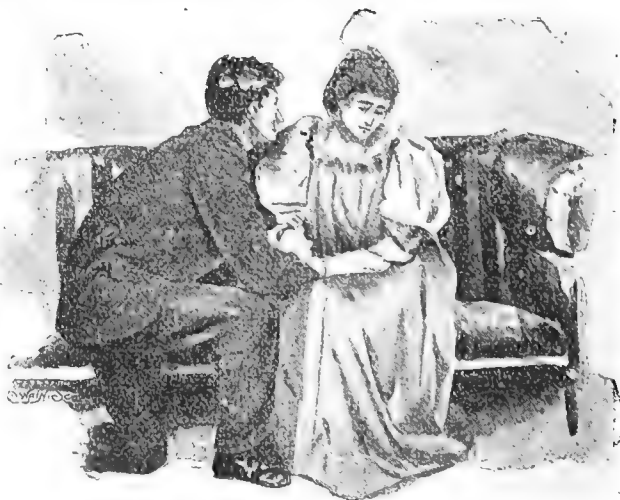
My blood ran cold. This annoying incident became terrible, filling me with the most passionate trouble. I looked at the girl in agony, but forced myself to smile, and whispered:

"It shall be done as you wish!"

My knees trembled, my mouth was dry and hot. The feeling that overwhelmed me was inexpressible. It was a strange mingling of bitterness and pleasure, that my loved one should be weak to such a degree. I forced myself to have a sort of disdainful pity, and in reality love beat ardent, strong, stern in my breast. I understood, in a flash, how beauty could become divine above baseness of soul, how one could respect it even in his honour—and a hundred other things in which were confused, fervent love, devotion without limit, a desire noble and perverse.

Jeanne had thanked me with hardly perceptible movement of the lips; she stood by the wall with an air of indifference and pride!

"They are very long about it!" she said sternly. "M-



In vain I supplicated.

de la Hestre is a man of method," someone replied. And a silence followed which told more and more on one's nerves, for even the waiting in a peaceful frame of mind finished by disturbing and emptying the brain, like a pump. However, the moment arrived when, the searching of the servants ended, the door opened, disclosing our host, the two witnesses, and the old gentleman.

My heart beat furiously; I felt myself become terribly pale; but, concealing my agitation and steadying my voice, I asked to be searched first.

M. de la Hestre smiled at what he considered the whim of a young man, and proceeded methodically to my examination. I blushed, I became pale, without anyone finding that peculiar under the circumstances. When it was over, I made two or three steps backward and I found myself near Jeanne. She lowered her fan and handed me something with a coolness that was only equalled by my calmness in seizing the object and placing it in a pocket of my coat. After which I leant against the fireplace, being now merely a witness and above all suspicion.

M. de la Hestre's search was unproductive of results. There remained nothing to do but to visit all the rooms and then inform the police.

Still my trouble of mind increased as I remained standing by the fireplace. My brain was in a whirl, and I felt the crime weigh on me as though I were indeed the thief!

Jeanne at last came towards me, with that undulating step of hers, and gave me a look of such passionate

gratitude that it almost seemed to scorch me. Then in an imperative low tone she said:

"Do you still love me?"

I did not hesitate. I replied firmly:

"Yes."

"In spite of all that I have done?"

"In spite of everything!"

"Will you marry me?"

"I will marry you."

She enveloped me with the same look, still warmer and more lingering. I fully comprehend the power of woman, above all law, human or natural, drawn from the fountain-head and against which nothing ought to prevail.

I felt strangely happy in this equivocal adventure, and I could not throw off this happiness for which I reproached myself and of which I was terribly ashamed.

As I was struggling with these contending emotions, exclamations were heard and I saw M. de la Hestre reappear holding a little box.

"We have the jewels and the guilty one!" he said very calmly.

I had only time to hear this much and to see the livid face of the valet—the guilty one—when I found that Jeanne was gently urging me out into the terrace where the shadows lay thickly. There I felt my head seized with two hands, while two pure lips were pressed to mine, as Jeanne murmured:

"The thief adores you! She has tricked you! To test your love she gave you her own box!"

S. T. L. TRAMM.

GILBERT ANSTRUTHER'S REVENGE.

"CONFOUND it!" muttered Commander Robinson, R.N., of H.M.S. *Minerva*. "I believe it's getting thicker," and indeed the fog had now settled down like a wall around the vessel, while the damp, cold, drizzling rain only added to the discomforts of the impenetrable atmosphere.

Suddenly the *Minerva* seemed to give a mighty shudder. The sound of splintering timbers and the agonised wail of human beings in distress rang out into the darkness. In a moment all was confusion. Loud shouts from the cruiser answered the shrieks from the unknown vessel with which she had collided.

But the steel ram had done its deadly work. The inexorable fog shut in the catastrophe. A cry, a confused scurry of awe-struck sailors—and yet another vessel had been claimed by the cruel Fog Fiend.

And with her bows in a shattered condition, the *Minerva* put into the nearest port for repairs.

Ill luck had followed the *Minerva* from the first. On her trial trip she had broken a propeller shaft. A brief space and one of her quick-firers had jammed and killed a marine. And now she had rammed some unfortunate barque beating up Channel in the dense fog.

Dry-docked, it was found that some little time must elapse before she could be again fit for sea.

It was no use for Commander Robinson to rave and

storm at the catastrophe. The official enquiry was annoying enough in all conscience. To make his annoyance more, the vessel was to be over-run with convicts, for it so happened that the only labour available at the port was that which Portland could supply—small wonder, then, for the commander's fury.

But he made himself as unpleasant as he could. The goal-birds should be given no chance to make themselves objectionable. A strong guard of marines was posted ashore, and the soldiers were given strict orders to fire should any necessity arise for their so doing.

Thus Private John Jenkins found himself on sentry-go, an interested spectator of the hideously-garbed convicts who sullenly and silently moved about in the occupation of their enforced labour.

A smart, well-set-up young fellow was Private Jenkins. His face, too, seemed strangely refined for a common soldier's. For though he had changed his name he could not eradicate the mark of breeding which was his birthright, and Gilbert Anstruther had at one time had a fairer future before him than that of a private of marines.

It was the old story. He had fallen into bad hands at the outset of his career. Six years ago he had been standing in the dock, charged with forgery. Thank goodness the charge was a false one; thank goodness,

too, the right man had been brought to book; but Gilbert Anstruther was ruined.

So Harold Delton, his false friend, had gone into penal servitude, and he himself had enlisted into the marines under an assumed name.

Small wonder, then, that as he gazed at the convicts a shudder shook his frame. He might have come to that himself. He pulled himself smartly together and resumed his monotonous march up and down.

A convict was working some yards away from him, who was softly whistling to himself. The tune was "Home, Sweet Home"! Private Jenkins could not see the fellow's face, but the back that was turned towards him was square and straight. "A good figure," thought Jenkins. Suddenly the man turned, and the blood rushed from the marine's face, for in that cruel, dark face he recognised the man who had wrecked his life—Harold Delton.

But the convict's face wore no expression of recognition. He merely stooped again as if to pick up a spade that lay at his feet. "Have you a plug of tobacco?" he muttered eagerly.

Jenkins turned abruptly on his heel, and continued his march. His brain was in a whirl. Delton! He could have killed the fellow—yet he turned again, and, as he passed the man for the second time, pulled out a cake of tobacco, and began to cut it in half.

Then he glanced carelessly at the convict, whose eyes were glittering wolfishly at sight of the longed-for weed. Jenkins hesitated. Then he dropped a portion of his tobacco, and continued his walk.

Delton pounced on the fragment like a hawk! Pah! what a tiny piece it was, and that hulking marine could get as much as he wanted, while he—the sentry again approached him.

Jenkins' fury had given way to a deep exultation. He thought of the last occasion on which he had seen the man, smiling, cool, collected in the crowded court, and now he was a common convict. Triumph had—

"Give me that other piece, or, as I live, I report you!" The words fell on the soldier's ears like a thunderbolt.

Delton's face was more like that of a beast than a human being. For a moment Jenkins was staggered. Could it be that the convict recognised him? But, no, that was impossible. And then hatred of the man took possession of him again. Oh! to be revenged—for it was no revenge to see him as he was now—oh, for some even greater disgrace to fall upon the villain who had cost him so much.

Then, swift as a flash, an idea seized upon the marine. He would lay a trap for his foe, and perhaps luck would favour him.

"In my great-coat pocket in the sentry-box," he said hoarsely, "you will find a large plug of tobacco. Slip in there and take it, only look sharp."

In a moment Delton's face changed its ferocity. He muttered something inarticulate. As the sentry, apparently dismissing the subject from his mind, sauntered on, the convict turned round, and began quietly stealing forward towards the sentry-box.

The marine watched him, however, like a cat. He saw the man reach the box, fumble in the great-coat pocket, and noted the malignant look of joy with which the fellow slipped something into the breast of his coarse shirt; then suddenly the soldier wheeled round.

"Hands up, you blackguard!" he roared, "or I fire!"

With an invective, Delton stopped still and faced his foe.

The sentry's rifle was pointed full at his chest. His

face turned an ashen hue beneath its sunburn. Another moment and a couple of warders were upon the convict.

"Hullo!" cried one of them. "295 showing fight?"

"No," answered Jenkins curtly, "but he has been collaring something out of my coat pocket from the sentry-box. You will find it in his shirt! A plug of tobacco, and I expect a two-shilling piece!"

For Jenkins, with commendable astuteness, had remembered the existence in his coat pocket of not only the tobacco but the piece of silver. He had, moreover, correctly gauged the cupidity of the convict. So in spite of Delton's protestations, he was hauled off to the guard-room, and Gilbert Anstruther had revenged himself.

Nor was that all. As the convict was being led away the sentry stepped up to him.

"Delton," he muttered.

The convict caught the word. An oath escaped his lips, and his black eyes flashed out a terrible look of recognition. And that was the last meeting between the two.

E. LE BRETON MARTIN.

PEARSON'S MAGAZINE.

MARCH, 1897.

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RESULT OF THE "TELEPHONE" COMPETITION.

IN this competition several clever attempts were forwarded, the best of which was devised by Mrs. Thorne, 96, Gilmore Road, Lewisham, S.E., whose conversation will appear next week.

SHOULD STOUT PERSONS STARVE THEMSELVES?

We are afraid that semi-starvation as a cure for corpulency prevails very much to a dangerous degree. Mr. Archer, the late well-known prominent jockey, was in the habit of going without food for a long stretch in order that he could ride a certain horse at its weight, and there is not much doubt that the debility resulting from this habit of abstemiousness was certainly not conducive to combating the dire attack of fever which was perhaps indirectly responsible for the untimely end, in the zenith of his fame, of this unfortunate but accomplished horseman. Even Mary Jane in the kitchen will eat sparingly of the food allowed her, while she will seek to reduce her fat by copious draughts from the vinegar cruet, and succeeds only in injuring the coats of her stomach—the forerunner of dyspeptic trouble which will be difficult to overcome. The Continental medicos seem to advocate this great reduction of ordinary foods, but one of these savants suggests that the stout person should eat considerably of fatty meats, in order that the appetite be appeased, and consequently less food required, so that practically this is indirectly advocating semi-starvation. On the other hand, Mr. Russell, the British specialist, takes a different course. He says: “Eat as much as you like,” and as it is an acknowledged fact that under his treatment persons lose from 2lb. to 12lb. per week, it beyond doubt stands out pre-eminent against those so-called starvation cures “made in Germany.” Some claim that Mr. Russell has to insist upon his patient's drinking hot water every morning; but, on the contrary, he avers that it is dangerous to do so, and has, of course, never advised it. No; the success of Mr. Russell's treatment is incomparably beyond other specialists, for he resorts to no stringent dietary, and simply prescribes a harmless vegetable tonic combination which is the outcome of years of study and botanical research. We advise all those interested in this question to get this book, the price of which is only twopence. It is entitled “Corpulency and the Cure” (256 pages), and is published by him at Woburn House, Store Street, London, W.C. It can be had direct.—*Ilfracombe Gazette and Observer*, January 12th, 1897.

IS OBESITY THE RESULT OF RICH DIET.

Fat begins to accumulate as soon as the system has attained its full development, and will go on increasing, if not checked, until the decline of life; then it ought again to decrease. Independently of the importance of fat as a non-conducting substance in impeding the too rapid escape of animal heat, it may be regarded as a store of material to compensate for waste of tissue under sickness or other circumstances entailing temporary absence from food. Most writers consider that obesity is promoted by a rich dietary, corporeal inactivity, tranquillity of mind, etc.; and, although admitting these to be conducive to the formation of fat, “I am of opinion,” writes Mr. F. C. Russell, the eminent specialist on “Corpulency and the Cure,” which is the title of a book (256 pages) now going through the Press with the eighteenth edition, “that obesity arising from such causes solely is comparatively rare. There is a diseased state of the system which, independently of all these influences, will

increase the production and deposition of fat.” We are of this gentleman's opinion. Mr. Russell, however, does not leave his readers who suffer from obesity “in the lurch,” for he prescribes a remedy, and a most effectual one, too, consisting solely of herbs which do not contain a particle of any deleterious ingredient, and yet he can reduce a person's weight from 2lb. to even 10lb. a week, without having to swallow nauseous physic or resort to drastic measures. This successful combination of vegetable extracts was not obtained without considerable research and painstaking investigation. It is rather pleasant to take. Three small doses will in many instances reduce from 1lb. to 3lb. in the short space of twenty-four hours. However, the cost of the book is only two stamps, and can be obtained direct from Mr. Russell, Woburn House, 27, Store Street, London, W.C. There are matters highly interesting to stout persons to be gleaned from his book, also hundreds of letters (reprinted) from persons describing the particulars and various fluctuating weights after taking so much of the compound. These are not the ordinary stereotyped sort of quick testimonials, but really from intelligent persons who certify to the extraordinary results of the medicine, in many cases to invite public attention to the marked effects demonstrated.—*Montrose Review*, January 8th, 1897.

A POSITIVE REMEDY FOR CORPULENCE.

Any remedy that can be suggested as a cure or alleviation for stoutness will be heartily welcomed. There has recently been issued a well-written book, the author of which seems to know what he is talking about. It is entitled “Corpulency and the Cure” (256 pages) and is a cheap issue (only twopence) published by Mr. F. C. Russell, of Woburn House, Store Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C. It appears that Mr. Russell has submitted all kinds of proofs to the English Press. The editor of the *Tablet*, the Catholic organ, writes: “Mr. Russell does not give us the slightest loophole for a doubt as to the value of his cure, for in the most straightforward and matter-of-fact manner he submitted some hundreds of original and unsolicited testimonial letters for our perusal, and offered us plenty more if required. To assist him to make this remedy known, we think we cannot do better than publish quotations from some of the letters submitted. The first one, a marchioness, writes from Madrid: ‘My son, Count —, has reduced his weight in twenty-two days 16 kilos = i.e., 34lb.’ Another writes: ‘So far (six weeks from the commencement of following your system) I have lost fully two stone in weight.’ The next (a lady) writes: ‘I am just half the size.’ A fourth: ‘I find it is successful in my case. I have lost 8lb. in weight since I commenced (two weeks).’ Another writes: ‘A reduction of 18lb. in a month is a great success.’ A lady from Bournemouth writes: ‘I feel much better, have less difficulty in breathing, and can walk about.’ Again, a lady says: ‘It reduced me considerably, not only in body, but all over.’ The author is very positive. He says: “Step on a weighing machine on Monday morning, and again on Tuesday, and I guarantee that you have lost 2lb. in weight without the slightest harm, and vast improvements in health through ridding the system of unhealthy accumulations.”—*Cork Herald*.

Answers to - - Correspondents.

I WISH here to call the special attention of readers to the series of stories now appearing in *S.S.* under the general heading: "DEEDS THAT WON THE EMPIRE." The statements made in these narratives are historically correct, and, in view of this fact, surely no more stirring reading matter could well be found. I should count it a great favour on your part if you called the attention of at least one friend to their publication.

SEAMAN.—The flags to be hoisted at one time in signalling at sea never exceed four. It is an interesting arithmetical fact that, with eighteen various coloured flags, and never more than four at a time, no fewer than 78,642 signals can be given.

J. S.—Leave your nose alone. If Nature intended it to be broad and fleshy at the point, do not attempt to make it otherwise. Nothing can be gained by meddling with your physiognomy.

JEWELLER.—Provided that you can produce evidence of the regular and previous purchase of the current and two previous weeks' issue of *P.W.*, there is no reason why you should not purchase your copies from a book-stall every week.

R. N. and MINNIE.—You will possibly be able to obtain particulars of the Canadian North-Western Mounted Constabulary from the office of the Canadian Government, 17, Victoria Street, Westminster, and particulars of emigration from the Emigrants' Information Bureau, 31, Broadway, Westminster.

NICOTINE.—I agree with you that in many instances it is a very unwise thing for a physician to insist upon a patient abstaining from smoking with a jerk, as it were. At the same time, in your case it may be absolutely necessary; but if you have no faith in your medical adviser, of course you had better try someone else.

J. P. L. appears to be subject to most curious dreams. Whenever he goes to sleep and dreams at all, the picture that presents itself to his mental vision takes the form of his body in a dying condition. Amongst many other things, he has been shot in battle, has broken his neck by tumbling off a bicycle, has fallen off a four-hundred feet chimney, has tobogganed down the stairs, and has got entangled in the paddle-wheels of a steamer, and he always wakes up at the moment of his death. He is getting very morbid about it, and altogether the young man is in continual dread of meeting with an untimely end. Consequently,

he takes all sorts of stimulants to prevent sleep, with the result that his health is giving way.——In this respect you are not alone. The mere fact of your dwelling upon the incidents—at the moment of falling asleep—is conducive to a repetition. There are no grounds for believing that any significance can be attached to the experience. There is no necessity here to go into details with regard to the psychological phenomena known as dreams, but you may take it for granted that they have no bearing whatever upon future events. If one dreams of a tom-cat and one's friend or lover is afterwards discovered in some act of treachery, the person dreaming immediately jumps to the conclusion that the fact of having dreamt of a tom-cat brings about this most unpleasant result. There is no more truth in this than there is in the fact that the moon has an effect upon the weather.

JOSHUA.—*Short Stories* is printed much more slowly than *P.W.*, owing to the care needed in reproducing the illustrations.

GRAMPUS.—Elephants were last used in battle in 1601. This is not taking into consideration their employment by the British in India at the present time.

FLIPPER.—Your suggestion is an excellent one—very excellent, in view of the fact that it was adopted in *P.W.* four years ago.

E. J. (Ravenscourt Park).—Thanks for conundrum. I have an idea, though, I have seen it somewhere before.

C. B.—I regret that it is impossible for me to answer your enquiry, as it is of a legal tendency, and I never give advice on subjects of this description.

ANENT a recipe which appeared a week or so ago in *Short Stories*, U. R. C. writes: "For chilblains on the hands and feet, there is a most excellent recipe from the pen of a celebrated Parisian doctor, which will be found to succeed after a few applications: Take a piece of alum about the size of a nut, and melt it in enough hot water to cover the hands. When the alum is melted, soak your hands in the liquid for nearly a quarter of an hour, then cover them at once with gloves, which you keep on all night, and as long as you can during the day. The feet should be treated in a similar way to the hands, drawing on thin cotton stockings over them."

FARMER.—It is estimated that twenty-two acres of land are necessary to sustain one man on fresh meat. The same space of land if devoted to wheat culture would feed forty-two persons; if to oats, eighty-eight; potatoes, Indian corn, and rice, one hundred and seventy-six, and if to the plantain or bread tree, over six hundred people.

THE SHADDER.—The summary has two uses: it enables a new reader to pick up the thread of the story, and, at the same time, refreshes the memory of the regular reader. Glad you like the "S.H." so much.

E. J. (Upper Norwood).—Thanks for the suggestion. For several reasons, however, it cannot be carried out.

CONSTANT SUBSCRIBER.—You will find a lot of pretty serviette designs in the early numbers of *Home Cookery*. The excursions to the Continent will be commenced in connection with *P.W.* very shortly.

P. N.—The railways of the world carry forty millions of people weekly.

H. T. L.—Yes. British warships are always fitted with lightning conductors.

S. P.—So far as I know, the front heading of *Short Stories* will be changed every week. There will be no more Jumbled Stories.

H. L.—You can put a fine gloss on glass by rubbing it with a piece of newspaper.

HERO WORSHIP.—Your remarks on the Nansen "boom" cover the opinions of many of my readers. Nansen is the author of several works of travel and scientific research, all of which, with other Nansen literature, may be had through any bookseller. As to the relative merits of "Darkest Africa" and "Farthest North," my opinion is that Nansen's work will prove the more popular. Of course, the price of the work is heavy, and many people who might purchase it if issued at a fourth of the price are prevented from so doing. There are the libraries, however, for you, and I may add that if you write the *Globe Sugar Company*, 86, Wilson Street, Glasgow, they will inform you of an inexpensive way in which you may obtain from them a reading of "Farthest North."

Notice to Competitors.

In all Prize Competitions the Editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entertained when once a competition is finished and the result published.

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*I am an
your faithful
Leonora Caselton.*

Now, it should be remembered that the man or woman with the strongest nervous system wins in the battle of life, for the nervous system controls and directs all the powers of a vigorous existence. This being the case, the duty of all is to strengthen this controlling power, and it has been proved by the experience of Mr. Caselton that nothing has been so effective in doing this as Dr. Tibbles' Vi-Cocoa.

Another letter just to hand from this gentleman says that all his friends whom he has induced to give Dr. Tibbles' Vi-Cocoa a trial have invariably "stuck to it," as have many thousands of others. Hence the phenomenal success of this wonderful Food Beverage. "I am still remarkably free from headaches, and am still letting the teapot severely alone. If at any time a representative would like an interview with me I should be happy to grant same, as I feel I could tell him much more about my case and the happy results of taking on Tibbles' Vi-Cocoa, and you would be at perfect liberty to use any information I might give him. I am constantly being questioned—I might say 'heckled'—as to the bona-fides of my unsolicited testimonial; but in every case I think I have succeeded in convincing my friends. I am sure you would be of the same opinion as myself did you but know all I have suffered in the past."

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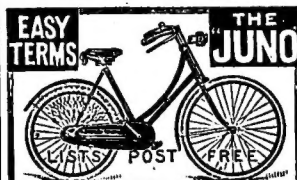
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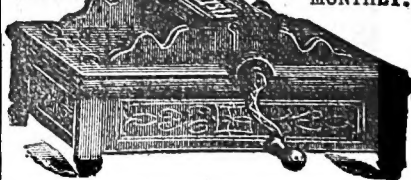
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